This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

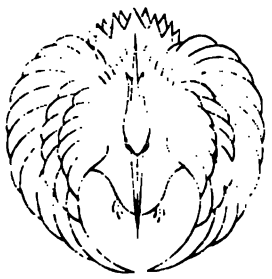
+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

Stanford University Libraries
3 6105 118 888 192

STANFORD UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY
Frances Agnes Bowman
Memorial Collection
Presented by
Roger W. Montgomery, Esq.



小寒節

THE WRITINGS OF

LAFCADIO HEARN

Large-Paper Edition

IN SIXTEEN VOLUMES

VOLUME I

The Ocklawaha River

The Oklawaha River

LEAVES FROM THE DIARY OF AN IMPRESSIONIST

CREOLE SKETCHES
AND
SOME CHINESE GHOSTS

BY
LAFCADIO HEARN

STANFORD LIBRARY

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
MDCCCCXXII
Wi

813.4
H431
v.1

COPYRIGHT, 1887, BY ROBERTS BROTHERS
COPYRIGHT, 1911 AND 1922, BY HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

487824

THE LARGE-PAPER EDITION IS LIMITED TO
SEVEN HUNDRED AND FIFTY COPIES PRINTED
AT THE RIVERSIDE PRESS, CAMBRIDGE, U.S.A.
NUMBER 318.

CONTENTS

LEAVES FROM THE DIARY OF AN IMPRESSIONIST

Introduction	xiii
Floridian Reveries	1
To the Fountain of Youth	3
A Tropical Intermezzo	19
A Name in the Plaza	30
Vultur Aura	37
Creole Papers	43
Quaint New Orleans and its Habitants	45
Creole Women in the French West Indies	54
Arabesques	73
Arabian Women	75
Rabyah's Last Ride	89

CREOLE SKETCHES

Introduction	103
The Glamour of New Orleans	107
La Douane	110
The City of Dreams	113
A Creole Type	118
A Visit to New Orleans	123
Complaint of Creole Boarding-House-Keeper	128
The Boarder's Reply	131
Why Crabs are Boiled Alive	135

CONTENTS

A Creole Journal 136
The Restless Boarder 138
Furnished Rooms 140
Mexican Coins 142
Louisiana People Not Gay 145
A Creole Courtyard 147
The Creole Character 149
A Kentucky Colonel Renting Rooms 151
The Dawn of the Carnival 153
A Mexican's Gratitude 155
Attention! Azim! 158
An Ultra-Canal Talk 161
A Creole Song 164
The Grandissimes 166
A Creole Mystery 171
Eleusis 175
Latin and Anglo-Saxon 180
A Visitor 183
Creole Servant Girls 188
Home 191
Old-Fashioned Houses 196
Some Positive Opinions 201
Voices of Dawn 206

SOME CHINESE GHOSTS

Preface 213
The Soul of the Great Bell 215
The Story of Ming-Y 222
The Legend of Tchi-Niu 242
The Return of Yen-Tchin-King 253

CONTENTS

The Tradition of the Tea-Plant 261
The Tale of the Porcelain-God 274
Notes 289
Glossary 293

ILLUSTRATIONS

THE OCKLAWAHA RIVER (*page* 10) *Frontispiece*

From a painting in water-colors by W. J. Harris.

THE ARMS OF SPAIN 38

From the Gate of the Old Spanish Fortress at St. Augustine, Florida, now called Ft. Marion.

THE PLACE D'ARMES, NEW ORLEANS 108

On the left of the Cathedral is the old Cabildo and on the right the Casa Curial.

BOURBON STREET, NEW ORLEANS 192

On the right of this street, which is in the old Creole quarter, is a house where Hearn once had his lodgings.

Except as otherwise stated, the illustrations are from photographs by CHARLES S. OLCOTT

LEAVES FROM THE DIARY OF AN IMPRESSIONIST

. . . Jeune artiste, tu attends un sujet? Tout est sujet; le sujet c'est toi-même: ce sont tes impressions, tes émotions, devant la nature. C'est toi qu'il faut regarder, et non autour de toi.

EUGÈNE DELACROIX

INTRODUCTION

I

On a memorable day a good many years ago a certain sub-editor, exploring the morning's mail, found his sense enthralled by a weird, sad, delicious odor. Perfumes in the mail were not unheard-of: violets there had been, and musk, and orange blossoms, and tobacco; and the sub-editor, with a fantasy appropriate to his station, even prided himself on his ability to close his eyes and pick out a California contribution by the unaided sense of smell. But never before had there been anything like this. Its chief essence was sandalwood, that was clear, but sandalwood so etherealized and mingled with I know not what of exotic scents that it gave to the imagination a provocative ghostly thrill indescribable. The basket of the Muses, hastily tumbled, disclosed a portentous envelope of straw color, with queer blue stamps in one corner, and queer unknown characters in another; yet queerest of all was the address in an odd orientalized hand, done with delicate, curiously curving strokes of the pen. Within, in a script still less Spencerian, these words met the sub-editor's excited eye:

The Dream of Akinosuké

"In the district called Toïchi of Yamato province, there used to live a gōshi named Miyata Akinosuké";

and so on through some twenty pages, telling a mystical legend of old Japan in a lovely and melodious English style.

This was the writer's first introduction to Lafcadio Hearn, known to him up to that time only by somewhat formidable repute as "the best interpreter of Japan," and mentally scheduled for perusal on a convenient opportunity which had never come. Since then Hearn's twenty volumes have been read and reread; there has been correspondence with his family and friends and with some who were not his friends; his complicated life has been investigated in detail; yet the sharpness, the intensity, of that first experience of his quality is not blurred. The impression that persists is that of weird, sad, delicious savor, of ghostly thrill.

This is not the place in which to retell in detail the romantic story of Hearn's oddly characteristic life, but if we briefly recall its main outlines in relation to the parallel outlines of his work, we shall perhaps find an added interest and significance in the examples of his early writing hereinafter collected.

Born in that Ionian Isle where Sappho destroyed herself for love, the child of an Irishman and a Greek, with an added strain of gypsy blood, Hearn first takes on human tangibility when we find him deserted by his parents and living in the ultra-religious household of a great-aunt in Wales, a little dark-eyed, dark-faced, passionate boy, "with a wound in his

heart and gold rings in his ears." In the fragments of autobiography dealing with this time, which Mrs. Wetmore has printed, we find his visionary little mind occupied with highly significant images — the horrors of hell-fire, ghosts, and "the breasts of nymphs in the brake," soon to be blotted out from the plates in his favorite book by the priest who had his education in charge.

After a romantic though somewhat vague Odyssey of misfortune, Hearn finally emerges in Cincinnati at the age of twenty as "Old Semi-Colon," a proof-reader and budding journalist by profession, a "flame-hearted" artist in words by aspiration. His appearance at this time, as a striking bearded portrait shows, was that of a Parisian poet not yet "arrived"; and that side of his temperament, which later made him style himself, half in irony, half in penitence, "a vicious, French-hearted scalawag," was then, perhaps, most restive. He attended spiritualistic séances, he tried a little opium, and made other fantastic experiments in life. But these are topics that need not concern us here. The important point is that with the Cincinnati period the tale of Hearn's career as a literary artist begins. He "devours" Hoffmann and writes marvelous murder-stories for the Sunday edition of his paper; he studies the methods of those great *prosateurs*, Flaubert and Gautier; and finally, before leaving Cincinnati in 1877, he completes the translation of the tales of Gautier which he published some years

later as "One of Cleopatra's Nights and Other Fantastic Romances."

In conveying the flavor of a strongly flavored writer the work was singularly successful. It was dedicated "To the lovers of the loveliness of the antique world, the lovers of artistic beauty and artistic truth." A dedication to the lovers of *macabre* would have been more appropriate. In his choice of tales, in his gusto in the rendering of certain passages, in the "flowers of the yew" which he thought best to add in an appendix, Hearn showed himself more macabresque than his master.

In 1877, Hearn, following apparently some temperamental attraction, moved to New Orleans.

As we look at the decade of his life there, the notable thing now is the growth of his artistic, and still more of his intellectual, power. At first his imagination was captured by the strange, tropical, intoxicating beauty of the old Creole city, its social and ethnological contrasts, its mysterious underworld, and barbaric cults. He felt it to be his artistic duty, he writes, "to be absorbed into this new life and study its form and color and passion." Yet little more than a year later we find him in a mood of disillusion and of something resembling remorse. He writes to Mr. H. E. Krehbiel:

> I am very weary of New Orleans. The first delightful impression it produced has vanished. The city of my dreams, bathed in the gold of eternal summer, and perfumed with amorous odours of orange flowers, has vanished

like one of those phantom cities of South America swallowed up centuries ago by earthquakes, but reappearing at long intervals to delude travellers. What remains is something horrible, like the tombs here — material and moral rottenness which no pen can do justice to. You must have read some of those mediæval legends in which the amorous youth finds the beautiful witch he has embraced all through the night crumble into a mass of calcined bones and ashes in the morning. Well, I feel like such a one, and almost regret that, unlike the victims of these diabolical illusions, I do not find my hair whitened and my lips withered by sudden age; for I enjoy exuberant vitality and still seem to myself like one buried alive or left alone in some city cursed with desolation like that described by Sinbad the sailor. No literary circle here; no jovial coterie of journalists; no associates save those vampire ones of which the less said the better. And the thought — Where must all this end? — may be laughed off in the daytime, but always returns to haunt me like a ghost in the night.

Later, his advantageous connection with the "Times-Democrat," and his friendship with some of the most interesting and cultivated people of the city, made him happier in his residence there. From 1881, the date of the passage quoted, his preoccupation is more and more with books, and the things of the intellect and imagination, with "the life of vanished cities and the pageantry of dead faiths," less and less with "vampire" associates. Yet still he purchases queer books, follows queer subjects, and "pledges himself to the worship of the Odd, the Queer, the Strange, the Exotic, the Monstrous," which, as he writes, "suits my temperament."

The chief literary expression of this impulse in its early phase was his "Stray Leaves from Strange Literature," largely written before 1883, and published two years later. This, a series of reconstructions of what impressed him as most fantastically beautiful in the most exotic literature he was able to obtain, shows a remarkable growth in mere craftsmanship over his translations from Gautier. The cadences are surer, the weird or gorgeous pictures built up from simpler words, and the exotic atmosphere is more enveloping and persuasive.

But the handful of arabesques that Hearn brought together in his "Stray Leaves from Strange Literature" was only a drop in the bucket that came up brimming from that deep well of "the Odd, the Queer, the Strange, the Exotic, the Monstrous." In the first five years of his work for the "Times-Democrat," he made and printed in the paper no fewer than two hundred translations of French stories and striking chapters or passages from the French books that engaged his eager attention. When we remember that the bulk of these versions were from the writings of the greatest contemporary masters of French prose — thirty-one were from Maupassant — we become aware of at least one of the sources of that extraordinary growth in Hearn's mastery of his instrument that can be seen when we compare the suave and luminous current of the prose of "Some Chinese Ghosts" in 1887, with the volume from Gautier, or even with the "Stray Leaves."

It was at this time, too, that Hearn, forsaking translation for original work, began to follow the leading of his imagination into characteristic paths. The readers of the "Times-Democrat," largely, of course, of French descent, gave him a sympathetic public for a type of work that could perhaps have appeared in no other paper in America. He printed, even apparently with a certain *réclame*, curious, condensed, personalized paraphrases of out-of-the-way books, like Perron's "Femmes Arabes," and other curious investigations of the Exotic, and passed easily from this into such excursions in aromatic impressionism as those that record his vacation in Florida, colored by his reading of Gaffarel's "Floride Française," or his studies of the Creole life and language.

It is this group of papers, of special interest and significance to the student of Hearn — themselves marked by the rich beginnings of his characteristic charm — that have been selected to form the bulk of the present volume. Hearn himself at one time began to prepare for the press a collection of these papers, with the "Floridian Reveries" as its initial section. Indeed, there is before me as I write a manuscript title-page done with those queer, curiously curving strokes of the pen, reading —

EPHEMERÆ

Leaves from the Diary of an Impressionist

and bearing the striking motto from Delacroix that

stands at the beginning of the present volume. Apparently it was Hearn's intention to add to the "Floridian Reveries" a little collection of "Fantastics," with such savory titles as "Aïda," "The Devil's Carbuncle," "A Hemisphere in a Woman's Hair," "The Fool and Venus," etc.

This group, however, is, unfortunately, lost. From the notebook labeled upon its cover "Fantastics" many leaves have been cut, and there remains only the paper on "Arabian Women," which appears hereafter. The Creole papers have been selected from the vast number of essays that Hearn wrote upon this subject, as showing best, perhaps, the peculiar direction of his interests. Taken as a whole, the material here offered to the reader marks the end of Hearn's first literary period, the period of translation and paraphrase, of "literary journalism."

The year 1883, as readers of his letters know, marked an epoch in Hearn's intellectual life. Then for the first time he read Herbert Spencer, and by a singular paradox conceived a passionate adoration for that passionless philosopher who, we may think, had the peculiar advantage of knowing so much about the "Unknowable." The secret of the paradox seems to have been that Spencer's vast synthetic panorama of the universe, outer and inner, was precisely the kind of vision to attract Hearn's gypsy intellect, so long bewildered by the "pageantry of dead faiths," so long obsessed by the incommunicable

sorrow of the world, yet pledged to the quest of "the absolute" by the forces of his Celtic and Hellenic ancestry. At any rate the philosophy of Spencer came to him with something of the power and unction of an evangelical religion, bringing with it not only conversion, but "conviction of sin," and "regeneration." From this time on, there was a new seriousness in his life and a new gravity in his work. Henceforth he was concerned about the Exotic and Monstrous chiefly as they could be employed as parables of the gospel according to Herbert Spencer.

A year or two later there came into his work another strain that was to remain potent — the tropical. As early as 1879 he had felt the spell, and had written: "So I draw my chair to the fire, light my pipe *de terre* Gambièse, and in the flickering glow weave fancies of palm trees and ghostly reefs and tepid winds, and a Voice from the far tropics calls to me across the darkness."

In 1884 he made the visit to Grande Isle in the Mexican Gulf that resulted in his "Chita," which is still in many respects his most astonishing *tour de force* in word-painting, though in it we see how far away he was from the English tradition of creative art in fiction. The only logic in the harrowing conclusion is the emotional logic of a temperament immitigably macabresque, that must make a tale of terror intensify in poignancy to the end.

In 1887, he went to the French West Indies, and

found there a theme perhaps more in consonance with the full richness of his vein than any he afterwards encountered. In "Youma," his West Indian novelette, the note is certainly falsetto, but in his "Two Years in the French West Indies" the luxuriant leafiness of his style, heavy with tropical perfumes, subtly interpenetrated with the sense of tropical terror, rarely goes beyond the bounds of faithful depiction. And underneath it all we begin to see that impressive Spencerian perception of the fatal unity of the world.

In June, 1888, Hearn landed in New York, but drunken as he was with tropic light, he was troubled by the canyoned streets, and returned to Martinique by the same boat that had brought him. In the following year he was in Philadelphia, preparing his West Indian books for the press. At this time he suddenly conceived a passionate and characteristic interest in Japan from reading Mr. Percival Lowell's "The Soul of the Far East." His correspondence is full of it. "How luminous," he exclaims, "how psychically electric!" It was with boundless delight and with the highest hopes that he welcomed a suggestion that he should go to Japan to prepare a series of articles upon that country.

As one who reads Hearn's writings chronologically passes from the West Indian books to the Japanese, there is evident a remarkable change, not only of atmosphere but of tone, and, despite the continuity

of the Spencerian preoccupation, of what we may perhaps call "soul." The tropical luxuriance of his earlier manner has been replaced by quieter tints and subtler cadences, and henceforth he gives free rein to his faculty only in rare heightened passages, which rise above the narrow, quiet stream of his habitual prose with an effect incomparably telling. In part this was the result of his sensitive perception of the peculiar color of Japanese landscape, "a domesticated Nature, which loves man, and makes itself beautiful in a quiet gray-and-blue way like the Japanese women"; which must in consequence be reproduced in water-color rather than in the oils in which he had been working. In part it was the result of his greater maturity, and that assured control over his medium, which left him no impulse to mere virtuosity. But still more, one thinks as one reads the letters, it was the result of happier and more normal conditions of life. As a professor of English literature, he had something approaching a secure social and economic position. As the friend of men like Professor Basil Hall Chamberlain, and Paymaster Mitchell McDonald, some of his oddities were neutralized. (He felt always more of a man, he said, after contact with their reality, "like Antæus, who got stronger every time his feet touched the solid ground.") As the father of three boys and the head of a Japanese household of eleven persons, he had for the first time a stake in the world. And finally in what was clearly a marriage of almost mi-

raculous suitability for him, his restless spirit found a measure of peace.

II

LAFCADIO HEARN has been called a "decadent"; the word does not signify, but if by it is meant, as sometimes seems to be, a humanist without physique, there is a considerable measure of truth in its application. If one symptom of decadence be the love of words for their own sake, it was, as we have seen, not lacking in his earlier work. There is, however, nothing more unjust to most human beings than the application to them of tags that have taken their color from trite literary usage and hasty popular association with a few notorious characters. This is especially true in Hearn's case. In 1885 he wrote to W. D. O'Connor: "If my little scraggy hand tells you anything, you ought to recognize in it a very small, erratic, eccentric, irregular, impulsive, nervous disposition — almost your antitype in everything except the love of the beautiful." The *advocatus diaboli* himself could scarcely have done better. Erratic, eccentric, irregular, impulsive, nervous, Hearn undoubtedly was; and these qualities, enhanced as they were by self-pity, so far from being what the psychologists call "independent variables," were of the very essence of his faculty. "Unless," he writes, "somebody does or says something horribly mean to me I can't do certain kinds of work"; and again: "I have found that the possessor of pure

horse-health never seems to have an idea of the 'half-lights.' It is impossible to see the psychical undercurrents of human existence without that self-separation from the purely physical part of being that severe sickness gives like a revelation."

For all his fine Byronic swimming of straits and wide bays Hearn was never the possessor of "pure horse-health," and it is pretty clear that to his lack of it, to his trembling sense of the hard attrition of the world, we owe his marvelous mastery of the "half-light." Yet this was not so much "morbidness" in our English sense, as *morbidezza*, the quality of mellow-tinted color and soft harmonies. Late in life he wrote, "I like Kipling's morbidness, which is manly and full of enormous resolve and defiance in the truth of God and Hell and Nature — but the other — no!" Of "the other" there is little trace in his own latest work.

The chief morbid factor in Hearn's physical constitution was his vision. One eye was totally blind, the other had, it is said, but one twentieth of normal vision; but too much has been made of this as a qualification of his genius. His monocular vision gave him, of course, landscape "flat," without perspective and depth; but undoubtedly, like the half-closed eye of the painter, it gave him color in wonderful harmonious intensity, and who shall say that it was with a vividness beyond Nature? The tremendous cumulative rhapsody of blue at the beginning of his "Two Years in the French West Indies"

is said by those who best know the Southern seas not to exceed reality. And there is plenty of evidence that in his quick, comprehending glances through the single eyeglass that he habitually carried, he seized minute significant details of persons or objects which others missed. It has been said by one who should be qualified to know, that he saw his world as partially and obscurely as one who looks through the large end of an opera-glass; but the analogy is imperfect unless we remember that objects so seen are given not only with remoteness, but with rich color, and with a curious artistic composition like a Claude in miniature.

But after all it was the lens in the brain that counted with Hearn. As opposed to his vision, his visionary faculty was of the first order. From boyhood, "ghostly" was his characteristic, as it finally came to be almost his trick word. He envisaged wraiths and vanished cities with a definition more like that of objective than of subjective sight. Only his skeptical intelligence kept him from being a thoroughgoing spirit-seer. Perhaps his most characteristic mood was that reflected in his impressive essay on "Dust" in "Gleanings from Buddha Fields" — "I have the double sensation of being myself a ghost and of being haunted — haunted by the prodigious luminous spectre of the world."

It is not necessary to go much further about to apprehend the inner nature of Lafcadio Hearn. In the same "Dust" there is a "lyrical" paragraph

that conveys him very perfectly: "I confess that 'my mind to me a kingdom is' — not! Rather it is a fantastical republic, daily troubled by more revolutions than ever occurred in South America; and the nominal government, supposed to be rational, declares that an eternity of such anarchy is not desirable. I have souls wanting to soar in air, and souls wanting to swim in water (sea-water, I think), and souls wanting to live in woods or on mountain tops." And so on through a Homeric catalogue of his souls, till at the end he breaks out, "*I* an individual — an individual soul! Nay, I am a population — a population unthinkable for multitude, even by groups of a thousand millions!"

Half-fantastic this passage may very well be, but none the less it is the faithful reflection of a temperament lacking the sane integrity of perfect health, a nature at odds with itself through many warring inheritances and subtle rebellions of the blood, yet mastered at the last in most of its human relations by a character essentially fine.

The final estimation of Hearn's work has been impeded by its scattered bulk, but now that it has been brought together in a collected edition it will be seen to stand very high in the second class of English prose, the class of the great *prosateurs*, Sir Thomas Browne, Thomas De Quincey, Walter Pater.

Had he lived longer his rank might have been higher still. He had outgrown his old decadent con-

ception of style as separable from substance, as an end to be attained in itself, to be arrived at by miners' work in dictionaries and thesauri. His work never ceased to be conscious art, but in his very latest writing there is a perfect fusion of his vigorous imaginative thought in the melancholy music of his cadenced prose. Toward the end of his life he had dreams more ambitious even than the stylistic ambitions of his youth so amply realized. In 1895 he wrote: "I really think I have stored away in me somewhere powers larger than any I have yet been able to use. Of course I don't mean that I have any hidden wisdom or anything of that sort, but I believe I have some power to reach the public emotionally if conditions allow." Still later the project is explicitly stated: "a single short, powerful philosophical story, of the most emotional and romantic sort." "I feel within me," he writes, "the sense of such a story — vaguely, like the sense of a perfume or the smell of a spring wind which you cannot define. But the chances are that a more powerful mind than mine will catch the inspiration first, as the highest peak most quickly takes the sun."

Whether his imagination, with all its activity, had quite the creative, shaping energy ever to fulfill this dream, we shall never know. But it is certain at any rate that the last of his work, published posthumously, shows both a broadening and a deepening of what, despite the artifice of his method, we may justly call his inspiration. Had he lived to complete

the imaginative autobiography of which fragments are printed in his "Life and Letters," it might have proved his masterpiece. The fragments have a sincere and haunting poignancy, and his prose was never more vivid and musical. For all that "population" within him, his own intellectual and imaginative life had been marked by a unity that would doubtless have induced a corresponding unity in the book, with striking artistic results.

The integrity of Hearn's intellectual life consisted in his strangely single-hearted devotion to both artistic beauty and scientific truth. And precisely in this, I believe, lies the significance of his work. He was, in a certain sense, the most Lucretian of modern writers. It has been said that, as Spinoza was "a man drunk with God," so Lucretius was "a man drunk with natural law." Well, Hearn was a man drunk with Herbert Spencer, and in all save the accident of form he was the poet of Spencerian evolution. As Lucretius, preaching his tremendous doctrine of the monstrous, eternal rain of atoms through the world, wove into his great poem the beauty of the old mythology, the tragedy of passionate humanity, so Hearn, in his gentler fashion, steadily envisaged the horror that envelops the stupendous universe of modern science, and by evoking and reviving ancient myths and immemorial longings, cast over the darkness a ghostly light of vanished suns.

In the final paragraph of his "Romance of the Milky Way" — the River Celestial along which, in

Japanese mythology, the spirits of the dead return to meet their loves beneath the moon — we have the heart of Lafcadio Hearn:

> Perhaps the legend of Tanabata, as it was understood by those old poets, can make but a faint appeal to Western minds. Nevertheless, in the silence of transparent nights, before the rising of the moon, the charm of the ancient tale sometimes descends upon me, out of the scintillant sky — to make me forget the monstrous facts of science, and the stupendous horror of Space. Then I no longer behold the Milky Way as that awful Ring of the Cosmos, whose hundred million suns are powerless to lighten the Abyss, but as the very Amanagowa itself — the River Celestial. I see the thrill of its shining stream, and the mists that hover along its verge, and the water-grasses that bend in the winds of autumn. White Orihimé I see at her starry loom, and the Ox that grazes on the farther shore; and I know that the falling dew is the spray from the Herdsman's oar. And the heaven seems very near and warm and human; and the silence about me is filled with the dream of a love unchanging, immortal — forever yearning and forever young, and forever left unsatisfied by the paternal wisdom of the gods.

If, as some hold, the problem of modern romantic literary art has been to portray the human spirit caught in a magic web of necessity, "penetrating us with a network subtler than our subtlest nerves"; to marry strangeness with beauty; to accomplish all this in a style as express and gleaming as goldsmith's work; then few writers have solved it more brilliantly than Lafcadio Hearn.

FERRIS GREENSLET

FLORIDIAN REVERIES

LEAVES FROM THE DIARY OF AN IMPRESSIONIST

* * *

TO THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH

May 2, 188–

Across the Floridian barrens to the sea — a long night and a longer day of steam travel over light powdery soil, the tint of hour-glass sand, whose dust filters like a ruddy fog through the joints of the double windows and tightly fitting doors of the sleeping-car; furious travel through wildernesses of yellow pine, whose naked and mastlike stems forever twinklingly intercross before one's tired eyes with the rapidity of lightning. The smoke of the engine descends to mingle with the low-hanging cloud of ruddy dust; the sun, which rose in advance of us, is now behind us, but there is yet no variation in the monotony of the woods. Sometimes the train halts at a rustic station — buildings of painted pine relieved against the endless background of living trees; the smoke floats off slowly through the heavy afternoon; the red dust settles lazily; and one rushes to the platform to snatch a breath of purer air, and to peer expectantly westward. Still nothing; — only the colonnades of pine filing away eternally to right and left, and the lurid road stretching end-

lessly backward and onward with its two streaks of iron light converging toward either horizon — and the voice of a bird in some green hiding-place, breaking the hot stillness with plaintive triple cry of "Sweet! — sweet! — sweet!" — repeated over and over again at drowsy intervals. Never a variation in the frondescence, never a flower; the melancholy of the land has begun to weigh upon you like a pain. Our city minds, our city eyes, accustomed to the relief of contrast, are tormented by creations of such perpetual sameness, of such enormous monotony, of such never-varying beauty as Nature devises in her own solitudes. These shadowy infinitudes do not seem formed for the gaze of the nineteenth century; their boundless uniformity rather inspires dreams of those coniferous growths which burdened the land in ages preceding the apparition of man — when there were yet neither blossoms nor perfumes, neither saccharine secretions nor succulent fruits — ere even the hum of honey-loving insects was heard, or the beauty of butterflies had been formed, or the nations of the ants had yet begun to toil — and all the earth was green.

Then a scream of steam, a mighty jolt; and the thunder-rattle recommences, and the train again begins to rock in mad storms of dust and smoke, and the red sun ignites a stupendous conflagration behind the pillars of the pines. At last, under the moon, there is another shriek of steam; the wheels slacken, rumble jerkingly, then roll slowly and si-

lently, as if muffled, with occasional squeak, and pause with a final shock; while through hastily opened windows and doors, a strong cool air dashes in — the breath of the great Saint John's River, sweetened by mingling with the mightier breath of the sea, and bearing with it scent of orange flowers and odors of magnolia.

And in the purple night, under the palpitation of stars, Jacksonville opens all her electric eyes.

May 4, 188–

MORNING inundates the streets with its fluid gold; the trees drink in the brightness; the plate-glass of store-fronts flames like immense jewel-facets; — and what singular stores these are! — mostly curiosity shops! Here are dealers in strange flowers, flowers formed of iridescent fish-scales — in jointed walking-canes of sharks' vertebræ — in tropical shells, bearing paintings of sabals and cypresses upon their nacreous inner surface — in splendid screens made of the spoils of white herons and sea-eagles — in sea-beans and sea-porcupines and seaweed fans and polished shells of the sea-turtle — in alligator-eggs and stuffed alligators, and live alligators in boxes — in alligators' teeth, burnished and gold-mounted as brooches, as cuff-buttons, as necklace ornaments, as earrings. Atavism in the evolution of the lapidary's art — an unconscious return of fashion to the savage bijoutry of fossil races! After perhaps not less than half-a-million of years our boasted civili-

zation finds æsthetic joy in the art of the Tertiary Epoch; and in the bud-smooth lobule of her dainty ear, the modern beauty does not hesitate to hang even such a decoration as that worn many thousand centuries ago by some primitive beauty — tall daughters of mammoth-hunters and lion-slayers.

The breath of the sea quivers in the emerald of the trees, and, sea-like, the broad Saint John's washes the feet of the white town. In the shadow of the wharves the water is deeply green and glossy as the surface of a magnolia leaf; farther out it brightens and changes to sky-color, and cools off into steel tint near the opposite shore. Violet bands moving over the immense breadth of the flood betray the course of mysterious currents. A long promontory, piercing the miles of unruffled water, mirrors the golden-greens, and sap-greens, and sombre greens of its unbroken woods; but much farther away, across the enormous curve, the forest lines, steeped in the infinite bath of azure light, turn blue. As through high gates of green, the eye looks up the vast turn into a cerulean world; and it is through these rich portals that you may sail into the region of legend and romance — that you may reach those subterranean rivers, those marvelous volcanic springs haunted by dim traditions of the Fountain of Youth, and by the memory of the good gray knight who sought its waters in vain.

And though the days of faith be dead, men look for that Phantom Fountain still. Yearly, from the

gray cities of wintry lands thousands hasten to the eternal summer of this perfumed place, to find new life, new strength — to seek rejuvenescence in the balm of the undying groves, in the purity of rock-born springs, in the elixir-breath of this tropical Nature, herself eternally young with the luminous youth of the gods. And multitudes pass away again to duller lands, to darker skies, rejuvenated indeed — the beauty with rose-bloom brightened, the toiler with force renewed — feeling they have left behind them here something of their hearts, something of their souls, caught like Spanish moss on the spiked leaves of the palms, on the outstretched arms of the cedars.

Why river-worship should have held so large a place in the ancient religions of the world, I thought I could more fully comprehend on that aureate afternoon — while our white steamer clove her way toward a long succession of purple promontories that changed to green at our approach, and the city was fading away behind us in smoke of gold. Blue miles of water to right and left; the azure enormity ever broadening and brightening before. Viewing the majesty of the flood, the immortal beauty of the domed forests crowning its banks, the day-magic of colors shifting and interblending through leagues of light, a sense of inexpressible reverence fills the mind of the observer — a sense of the divinity of Nature, the holiness of beauty. These are the visions we must call celestial; this is the loveliness that is sacred,

that is infinite — the poetry of heaven. Through the splendor of blue there seemed to float to my memory as sounds float to the ear, some verses of an ancient Indian hymn, whereof the authorship has been ascribed even to the Spirit of the Universe:

> I am the sweetness of waters, the light of moon and sun, the perfume of earth, the splendor of fire. . . . I am the Soul in all that lives; — Time-without-end am I, and the life of things to be, the Spirit celestial and supreme, MOST ANCIENT AND MOST EXCELLENT OF POETS.

The sun dropped through a lake of orange light, and there were lilac tints in the sky, and ghostly greens. Then the great indigo darkness came; stars sparkled out; the boat chanted her steam song, slackened her speed before a yellow glimmering of lamps, and halted at the wharves of Palatka. Here we bade her farewell; too huge a craft she was for the pilgrimage we wished to make to the mysterious fountain. Slender and light the boat must be that makes the journey thither — a voyage upon stranger waters than these: no giant stream like the Saint John's, but a dim river with an Indian name, a narrow river undulating through the forest like some slow serpent unrolling its hundred coils of green. And, as a greater serpent devours a lesser one, so the writhing Ocklawaha swallows the shining current that flows from the Silver Spring.

Seated that evening on a balcony that jutted out under the starlight, above the crests of palmettoes, I pondered upon the legend of the Fountain. It was

among the Bahamas that Juan Ponce de Leon first sought for the waters of youth — striving to discover some island vapory and vague as Hesperus, and questioning curiously the Indians of the Archipelago. Then it was he heard of the mainland where "the wished-for waters flowed as a river upon whose banks lived the rejuvenated races in serene idleness and untold luxuriance." Was this a rumor of the spring with a silver name, whose waters indeed "flow as a river"? — or was it an Indian tale of some other one of those many and wondrous Floridian sources whose unfathomed transparencies own the iridescent magnificence of jewel-fire? Or might not the valiant Spaniard have heard in his boyhood some Moorish story of that mystic fountain which the Prophet Khader alone of all God's creatures was permitted to find? And that Moslem tradition itself, had it not been brought to Islam by Arabian travelers to the farther East — as a bud from the marvelous garden of Hindoo myth — a fairy-flower created by the poet-wizards of India — a blossom of parable, perchance, called into being by the lips of Buddha? "Not wholly thus," deep scholars answer; "for the legend of Gautama is only a poem evolved from ancient myths of the Sun-god; and the fable of the Fountain doubtless first sprang from the primitive belief that the Day-Star, whose glory waned with evening, nightly renewed the strength of his splendor by bathing in the fountains of Ocean — in the enchanted waters of the West." Perhaps, per-

haps! — But can we boldly aver that the beautiful myth is not more ancient still — old as love — old as the mourning for the dead — old as the heart of man, and its dreams of the eternal, and its desires of the impossible?

May 5, 188–

FROM the deck of the slender Osceola, looking up the river, the eye can seldom see more than a hundred yards of the Ocklawaha at one time: so sudden and so multitudinous are the turns of the stream that the boat seems ever steering straight for land — continually moving into fluvial recesses without an exit. But always as she seems about to touch the bank, a wooded point detaches itself from the masses of verdure — a sharp curve betrays its secret — a new vista terminating in new mysteries of green, opens its gates to our prow. Narrow and labyrinthine the river is, but so smooth that like a flood of quicksilver it repeats inversely all the intricacies of tangle growths, all delicate details of leaf and blossom, all the bright variations of foliage color. And gradually one discerns a law of system in those diversities of tint — an ordination in the variety of tree-forms. Near the water the swamp-growth is dwarfed, tufted, irregular, but generally bright of hue; farther back it rises to majestic maturity, offering a long succession of domes and cupolas of frondescence, alternated with fantastic minarets of cypress; behind all, the solid and savage forest towers like a

battlement, turret above turret, crown above crown — oak and ash, maple and pine. The dominant tone is the light green of the pines and the gum-trees, and the younger ranks of cypress; but the elder cypress and the myrtles, and the younger ash, break through with darker masses of color. Singularly luminous greens also shine out at intervals in the wreathings of love-vines and in the bursts of sweet-bay. But whether radiant or sombre, the color is seen as through a gauze — through the gray veil ubiquitously woven by the aerial moss that fringes every crest, that drools from every twig, that droops in myriad festoons, that streams in hoary cascades from every protruding bough. And mistletoe mingles with the moss, and air-plants nestle in the armpits of the cypresses, and orchids bloom on dead limbs; while, from the morass below, extraordinary parasitic things, full of snaky beauty, climb and twine and interwreathe, often to lose their strangling hold at last, and fall back in spiral coils.

Then also, to right and left, broad bands of translucent green begin to edge the river surface — the nations of the water-lilies uprearing their perfumed heads — some whiter than moonlight, some yellower than gold. All start and tremble at our passing, as though suddenly aroused from slumber; and I long watch them nodding in our wake, more and more drowsily, slowly settling down to dream again.

Rarely there comes a break in the solid leagues of forest-wall — a deep space filled with celestial color,

a golden green, the green of orange-groves — making the wilder tints of Nature turn spectral by contrast. These indeed are the veritable Gardens of Hesperides, and theirs the bright fruit of Greek legend — those Apples of Gold the Demigod sought in mythic islands of the Western Sea — that Hippomenes, hard-pressed in the race of love, cast before the flying feet of Atalanta. For the orange hath its mythology.

Little frogs, metallically bright as the lily-leaves on which they sit, chant in chorus; butterflies flutter on vermilion wing from bank to bank; sometimes the nose of an alligator furrows the river. The palmettoes, heretofore rare, begin to multiply; they assemble in troops, in ranks, in legions. And other gracious forms appear — true palms — satin-skinned and wonderfully tall. They hold themselves aloof from the cypresses and the oaks; they don no draperies of moss — proudly majestic in the elegance of their naked beauty. They approach the flood, yet shrink from it with feminine timidity; if the treacherous soil yield beneath their feet, still, by some miracle of poise, they save themselves from fall. Then wonderful indeed is the suppleness of their curves; the neck of the ostrich, the body of the serpent, seem less lithely beautiful. Theirs is never the admirable but inflexible stature of the pine; the bodies of all are comely with indulation; they balance as in a dance; they poise as in a ballet — a fairy saraband of *coryphineæ*.

What wonder that the comeliness of the palm should have been by ancient faith deemed divine; that, among all trees of earth, this should have been chosen as the symbol of light, of victory, of riches, of generation! Sacred to the sun, and to the goddess Niké (whose appellation was *Dea Palmaris*) — emblem of immortality for the Orphic poets — blessed also by the Christ and by him selected even as the token of salvation — ancient truly is the right of the palm to reverence as divinest of trees. Yet not less ancient its claim to preëminence of beauty. Arab and Greek and Hebrew poets discovered in its shapeliness the most puissant comparison for human grace; the soft name Thamar signifies a palm; the charm of woman has been likened to the pliant symmetry of the tree by the bard of the Odyssey, by the wild authors of the Moallakat, and by the singer of the Song of Songs.

Darkness comes without a moon; and the torchfires of the Osceola are kindled to light our way through the wilderness. The night journey becomes an astonishment, a revelation, an Apocalypse.

Under the factitious illumination the banks, the roots, the stems, the creepers, the burdened boughs, the waving mosses, turn white as dead silver against the background of black sky; it is a Doresque landscape, abnormally fantastic and wan. Close to shore the relief is weirdly sharp; beyond, the heights of swamp forest rise dim and gray into the night, like

shapes of vapor. There are no greens visible under this unearthly radiance; all is frosty-white or phantom gray; we seem to voyage not through a living forest, but through a world of ghosts. Forms grotesque as fetishes loom up on all sides; the cypresses in their tatters throng whitely to the black flood, as Shades to the Styx. And panoramas begin to unroll themselves, monstrous as witchcraft; there are mockeries of gibbets; there are processions in cerements; there are phantasmal Crucifixions.

New groves of palm pass by — all gray as death; still beautiful they are, but with a sinister beauty; their crests seem horrent with menace; their stems appear to writhe in the spectral light; and they are oddly tall. "How high?" I asked the grizzled captain of the Osceola. "I have seen them seventy-five feet," he answered. But in that illusive light they seem far loftier — terrifically tall — preternaturally heightened as in a dream. And their physiognomy has wholly changed; their phantasmal beauty no longer holds a suggestion of hallowed attributes, of luminous poetry, of the mythical cosmogonic and anthropogonic Tree; but it recalls the memory of the strangest of all legends regarding the origin of the palm — the old Greek story that strong Herakles, descending into hell, first uprooted it from the Plutonian soil, and transported the infernal growth to the regions of life and light.

And the forest, ever weirder and higher, opens itself before us in tremendous vistas, in awful succes-

sion of surprises — each more startling than the last — as though seeking to terrify, as though resolved to frighten man away from its solitudes. We move in silence; few speak; no one laughs: the necromancy of the woods hangs upon us like a spell. And there comes a cold, such a cold as might precede the advent of an apparition — the chill of heavy dews distilled in the atmosphere of morasses — a death-sweat of foliage strangling in the embrace of oxygen-devouring plants. Even the frogs have ceased to call.

Suddenly the darkness shrieks! — a scream of anguish, long and frightful, and thrice repeated, rises from the woods. "Only a bird," the captain says. Is there, indeed, a bird in the world that can utter so hideous a cry? Again and again it rends the night, while the woods ever display new terrors, new extravaganzas of ghastliness. As a traveler belated, who sings loudly in the darkness to give himself courage, the Osceola opens her iron throat, and shouts with all her voice of steam. And the deep forest laughs in scorn, and hurls back the shout with a thousand mockeries of echo — a thousand phantom thunders; and the bitter triple cry of anguish follows us still over the sable flood.

But the Fountain of Youth is not now far away; midnight is past; the trees lock arms overhead; and we glide through the Cypress Gates.

Lulled by the monotonous throbbing of the machinery — the systole and diastole of the steamer's

heart — I sank to sleep and dreamed; but the spectra of the woods filled all my dreams. It seemed to me that I was floating — lying as in a canoe, and all alone — down some dark and noiseless current — between forests endless and vast — under an unearthly light. White mosses drooped to sweep my face; phantoms of cypress put forth long hands to seize. Again I saw the writhing and the nodding of the palms: they elongated their bodies like serpents; they undulated quiveringly, as cobras before the snake-charmer. And all the moss-hung shapes of fear took life, and moved like living things — slowly and monstrously, as polyps move. Then the vision changed and magnified; the river broadened Amazonianly; the forests became colossal — preternatural — world-shadowing at last — meeting even over the miles of waters; and the sabals towered to the stars. And still I drifted with the mighty stream, feeling less than an insect in those ever-growing enormities; and a thin Voice like a wind came weirdly questioning:

Ho! thou dreamer of dreams! — Hast ever dreamed aught like unto this? — This is the Architecture of God!

May 6, 188–

How divine the coming of the morning — the coming of the Sun — exorcising the shadowy terrors of the night with infinite restoration of color! I look upon the woods, and they are not the same: the palms have vanished; the cypresses have fled away;

trees young and comely and brightly green replace them. A hand is laid upon my shoulder — the hand of the gray captain: "Go forward, and see what you have never seen before." Even as he speaks, our boat, turning sharply, steams out of the green water into — what can I call it? — a flood of fluid crystal — a river of molten diamond — a current of liquid light?

"It will be like this for eight miles," observed the captain. Eight miles! — eight miles of magic — eight miles of glory! O the unspeakable beauty of it! It might be fifty feet in depth at times; yet every pebble, every vein of the water-grass blades, every atom of sparkling sand, is clearly visible as though viewed through sun-filled air; and but for the iridescent myriads of darting fish, the scintillations of jewel-color, we might well fancy our vessel floating low in air, like a balloon whose buoyancy is feeble. Water-grasses and slippery moss carpet much of the channel with a dark verdure that absorbs the light; the fish and tortoises seem to avoid those sandy reaches left naked to the sun, as if fearful the great radiance would betray them, or as though unable to endure the force of the beams descending undimmed through all the translucent fathoms of the stream. It has no mystery this laughing torrent, save the mystery of its subterranean birth; it doffs all veils of shadow; the woods gradually withdraw from its banks; and the fires of the Southern sun affect not the delicious frigidity of its waves. Almost

irresistible its fascination to the swimmer; one envies the fishes that shoot by like flashes of opal, even the reptiles that flee before the prow; a promise of strange joy, of electrical caress, seems to smile from those luminous deeps — like the witchery of a Naiad, the blandishment of an Undine.

And so we float at last into a great basin, dark with the darkness of profundities unfathomed by the sun; — the secret sources of the spring, the place of its mystic fountain-birth, and the end of our pilgrimage. Down, down, deep, there is a mighty quivering visible; but the surface remains unmoved; the giant gush expends its strength far beneath us. From what unilluminated caverns — what subterranean lakes — burst this prodigious flow? Go ask the gnomes! Man may never answer. This is the visible beginning, indeed; but of the invisible beginning who may speak? — not even the eye of the Sun hath discerned it; the light of the universe hath never shone upon it. Earth reveals much to the magicians of science; but the dim secret of her abysses she keeps forever.

A TROPICAL INTERMEZZO

THE broken memory of a tale told in the last hours of a summer's night to the old Mexican priest by a dying wanderer from the Spanish Americas. Much the father marveled at the quaintness of the accent of the man, which was the quaintness of dead centuries. . . .

Now the land of which I tell thee is a low land, where all things seem to have remained unchanged since the beginning of the world — a winterless land where winds are warm and weak, so that the leaves are not moved by them — a beshadowed land that ever seemeth to mourn with a great mourning. For it is one mighty wold, and the trees there be all hung with drooping plants and drooling vines, and dribbling mossy things that pend queerly from the uppermost branchings even to the crankling roots. And there be birds in that wold which do sing only when the moon shineth full — and they have voices, like to monks — and measured is their singing, and solemn, and of vasty sound — and they are not at all afraid. But when the sun shineth there prevaileth such quiet as if some mighty witchcraft weighed upon the place; and all things drowse in the great green silence.

Now on the night of which I tell thee, we had camped there; and it seemed to me that we might in sooth have voyaged beyond the boundaries of the

world; for even the heavens were changed above us, and the stars were not the same; and I could not sleep for thinking of the strangeness of the land and of the sky. And about the third watch I rose and went out under those stars, and looked at them, and listened to the psalmody of the wonderful birds chanting in the night like friars. Then a curious desire to wander alone into the deep woods came upon me. — En chica hora Dios obra! — In that time I feared neither man nor devil; and our commander held me the most desperate in that desperate band; and I strode out of the camp without thought of peril. The grizzled sentry desired to question me; — I cursed him and passed on.

And I was far away from the camp when the night grew pale, and the fire of the great strange cross of stars, about which I have told thee, faded out, and I watched the edge of the east glow ruddy and ruddier with the redness of iron in a smithy; until the sun rose up, yellow like an orange is, with palm-leaves sharply limned against his face. Then I heard the Spanish trumpets sounding their call through the morning; but I did not desire to return. Whether it was the perfume of the flowers, or the odors of unknown spice-trees or some enchantment in the air, I could not tell thee; but I do remember that, as I wandered on, a sudden resolve came to me never to rejoin those comrades of mine. And a stranger feeling grew upon me like a weakness of heart — like a great sorrow for I knew not what; and the fierceness

of the life that I had lived passed away from me, and I was even as one about to weep. Wild doves whirred down from the trees to perch on my casque and armored shoulders; and I wondered that they suffered me to touch them with my hands, and were in no wise afraid.

So day broadened and brightened above me; and it came to pass that I found myself following a path where the trunks of prodigious trees filed away like lines of pillars, reaching out of sight — and their branches made groinings like work of arches above me, so that it was like a monstrous church; and the air was heavy with a perfume like incense. All about me blazed those birds which are not bigger than bees, but do seem to have been made by God out of all manner of jewels and colored fire; also there were apes in multitude, and reptiles beyond reckoning, and singing insects, and talking birds. Then I asked myself whether I were not in one of those lands old Moors in Spain told of — lands near the sinking of the sun, where fountains of magical water are. And fancy begetting fancy, it came to pass that I found me dreaming of that which Juan Ponce de Leon sought.

Thus dreaming as I went on, it appeared to me that the green dimnesses deepened, and the forest became loftier. And the trees now looked older than the Deluge; and the stems of the things that coiled and climbed about them were enormous and gray; and the tatters of the pendent mosses were blanched

as with the hoariness of ages beyond reckoning. Again I heard the trumpet sounding — but so far off that the echo was not louder than the droning of the great flies; and I was gladdened by the fancy that it would soon have no power to reach mine ears.

And all suddenly I found myself within a vast clear space — ringed about by palms so lofty that their tops appeared to touch the sky, and their shadows darkened all within the circle of them. And there was a great silence awhile, broken only by the whispering of waters. My feet made no sound, so thick was the moss I trod upon; and from the circle of the palms on every side the ground sloped down to a great basin of shimmering water. So clear it was that I could perceive sparkles of gold in the sands below; and the water seemed forced upward in a mighty underflow from the centre of the basin, where there was a deep, dark place. And into the bright basin there trickled streamlets also from beneath the roots of the immense trees; and I became aware of a great subterrene murmuring, as if those waters — which are beneath the earth — were all seeking to burst their way up to the sun.

Then, being foredone with heat and weariness, I doffed my armor and my apparel and plunged into the pool of the fountain. And I discovered that the brightness of the water had deluded me; for so deep was it that by diving I could not reach the bottom. Neither was the fountain tepid as are the slow river currents of that strange land, but of a pleasant frig-

idness — like those waters that leap among the rocks of Castile. And I felt a new strength and a puissant joy, as one having long traveled with burning feet through some fevered and fiery land feeleth new life when the freshness of seawinds striketh against his face, and the jocund brawling of the great billows smiteth his ears through the silence of desolation. And the joyousness I knew as a boy seemed to flame through all my blood again — so that I sported in the luminous ripples and laughed aloud, and uttered shouts of glee; and high above me in the ancient trees wonderful birds mocked my shoutings and answered my laughter hoarsely, as with human voices. And when I provoked them further, they did imitate my speech till it seemed that a thousand echoes repeated me. And, having left the fount, no hunger nor weariness weighed upon me — but I yielded unto a feeling of delicious drowsihead, and laid me down upon the moss to sleep as deeply as an infant sleepeth.

Now, when I opened mine eyes again, I wondered greatly to behold a woman bending over me — and presently I wondered even much more, for never until then had it been given me to look upon aught so comely. Begirdled with flowers she was, but all ungarmented — and lithe to see as the rib of a palm-leaf is — and so aureate of color that she seemed as one created of living gold. And her hair was long and sable as wing-feathers of ravens are, with shifting gleams of blue — and was interwoven with curi-

ous white blossoms. And her eyes, for color like to her hair, I could never describe for thee — that large they were, and limpid, and lustrous, and sweet-lidded! So gracious her stature and so wonderful the lissomeness of her, that, for the first time, I verily knew fear — deeming it never possible that earthly being might be so goodly to the sight. Nor did the awe that was upon me pass away until I had seen her smile — having dared to speak to her in my own tongue, which she understood not at all. But when I had made certain signs she brought me fruits fragrant and golden as her own skin; and as she bent over me again our lips met, and with the strange joy of it I felt even as one about to die — for her mouth was —

"Nay, my son," said the priest, preventing him, "dwell not upon such things. Already the hand of death is on thee; waste not these priceless moments in speech of vanity — rather confess thee speedily that I may absolve thee from thy grievous sin."

So be it, padre mio, I will speak to thee only of that which a confessor should know. But I may surely tell thee those were the happiest of my years; for in that low dim land even Earth and Heaven seemed to kiss; and never did other mortal feel the joy I knew of, love that wearies never and youth that passeth never away. Verily, it was the Eden garden, the Paradise of Eve. Fruits succulent and perfume were our food — the moss, springy and ever cool, formed our bed, made odorous with flowers;

and for night-lamps we prisoned those wondrous flies that sparkle through darkness like falling stars. Never a cloud or tempest — no fierce rain nor parching heat, but spring everlasting, filled with scent of undying flowers, and perpetual laughter of waters, and piping of silver-throated birds. Rarely did we wander far from that murmuring hollow. My cuirass, and casque, and good sword of Seville, I allowed to rust away; my garments fell into dust; but neither weapon nor garment were needed where all was drowsy joy and unchanging warmth. Once she whispered to me in my own tongue, which she had learned with marvelous ease, though I, indeed, never could acquire hers: "Dost know, Querido mio, here one may never grow old?" Then only I spake to her about that fountain which Juan Ponce de Leon sought, and told her the marvels related of it, and questioned her curiously about it. But she smiled, and pressed her pliant golden fingers upon my lips, and would not suffer me to ask more — neither could I at any time after find heart to beseech her further regarding matters she was not fain to converse of.

Yet ever and anon she bade me well beware that I should not trust myself to stray alone into the deep dimness beyond the dale of the fountains: "*Lest the shadows lay hold upon thee*," she said. And I laughed low at her words, never discerning that the Shadows whereof she spake were those that Age and Death cast athwart the sunshine of the world.

"Nay, nay, my son," again spoke the priest; "tell me not of Shadows, but of thy great sins only; for the night waneth, and thine hour is not far off."

Be not fearful, father; I may not die before I have told thee all. . . . I have spoken of our happiness; now must I tell thee of our torment — the strangest thing of all? Dost remember what I related to thee about the sound of the trumpet summoning me? Now was it not a ghostly thing that I should hear every midnight that same summons — not faintly as before, but loud and long — once? Night after night, ever at the same hour, and ever with the same sonority, even when lying in her arms, I heard it — as a voice of brass, rolling through the world. And whensoever that cursed sound came to us, she trembled in the darkness, and linked her arms more tightly about me, and wept, and would not be comforted till I had many times promised that I should not forsake her. And through all those years I heard that trumpet-call — years, said I? — nay, *centuries* (since in that place there is not any time nor any age) — I heard it through long centuries after all my comrades had been laid within their graves.

And the stranger gazed with strange inquiry into the priest's face; but he crossed himself silently, and spoke no word.

And nightly I strove to shut out the sound from my ears and could not; and nightly the torment of hearing it ever increased like a torment of hell — ay

de mi! nightly, for uncounted generations of years! So that in time a great fury would seize me whenever the cursed echoes came; and, one dark hour, when she seemed to hear it not, and slept deeply, I sought my rusted blade, and betook me toward the sound — beyond the dale of fountains — into the further dimness of swaying mosses — whither, meseems, the low land trendeth southward and toward those wan wastes which are not land nor water, yet which do quake to a great and constant roaring as of waves in wrath.

A moment the voice of the aged man failed him, and his frame quivered as in the beginning of agony.

Now I feel, padre, that but little time is allotted me to speak. I may never recount to thee my wanderings, and they, indeed, are of small moment. — Enough to tell thee that I never again could find the path to the fountains and to her, so that she became lost to me. And when I found myself again among men, lo! the whole world was changed, and the Spaniards I met spake not the tongue of my time, and they mocked the quaintness of my ways and gibed at the fashion of my speech. And my tale I dared tell to none, through fear of being confined with madmen, save to thee alone, and for this purpose only I summoned thee. Surely had I lived much in this new age of thine men must have deemed me bereft of reason, seeing that my words and ways were not like unto theirs; but I have passed my years in

the morasses of unknown tropics, with the python and the cayman — and in the dark remoteness of forests inhabited by monstrous things — and in forgotten ruins of dead Indian cities — and by shores of strange rivers that have no names — until my hair whitened and my limbs were withered and my great strength was utterly spent in looking for her.

"Verily, my son," spake the confessor, "any save a priest might well deem thee mad — though thy speech and thy story be not of to-day. Yet I do believe thy tale. Awesome it is and strange; but the traditions of the Holy Church contain things that are not less strange: witness the legend of the Blessed Seven of Ephesus, whose lives were three hundred and sixty years preserved that the heresy concerning the resurrection of the flesh might be confounded forever. Even in some such way hath the Lord preserved thee through the centuries for this thine hour of repentance. Commend, therefore, thy soul to God, repentingly, and banish utterly from thee that evil spirit who still tempts thee in the semblance of woman."

"Repent!" wonderingly spake the wanderer, whose great black eyes flamed up again as with the fires of his youth; "I do not repent, I shall never repent — nor did I summon thee hither that thou shouldst seek to stir me to any repentance. — Nay! more than mine own soul I love her — unutterably, unswervingly, everlastingly! Aye! greater a thousand fold is my love of her than is thy hope of heaven, thy dread of death, thy fear of hell. — Repent! — beyond all time shall I love her, through eternity of eternities — aye! as thou wouldst say, even por los siglos de los siglos."

Kneeling devoutly, the confessor covered his face with his hands, and prayed even as he had never prayed before.

When he lifted his eyes again, lo! the soul had passed away unshriven; — but there was such a smile upon the dead face that the priest marveled, and murmured, with his lips: "Surely he hath found Her at last!"— Faintly, with the coming of the dawn, a warm south wind moved the curtains, and bare into the chamber rich scent of magnolia and of jessamine and of those fair blossoms whose odor evoketh beloved memory of long-dead bridal-mornings — until it seemed that a weird sweet Presence invisible had entered, all silently, and stood there even as a Watcher standeth. And all the East brightened; — and, touched by the yellow magic of the sun, the vapors above the place of his rising formed themselves into a Fountain of Gold.

A NAME IN THE PLAZA

June 3, 18–

SOMETIMES, in that gloaming that divides deep sleep from the awakening — when out of the world of wavering memories the first thin fancies begin to soar, like Neuroptera, rising on diaphanous wing from a waste of marsh-grasses — there suddenly comes an old, old longing that stings thought into nervous activity with a sharp pain. The impression in the first moment of wakefulness might be likened to a sense of nostalgia — but the nostalgia which is rather a world-sickness than a homesickness; there is something in it also resembling the vain regret for what has been left perhaps twenty years' journey behind us, and has now become a tropical remembrance because we have traveled so far toward the Northern Circle of life. Yet the longing I refer to is more puissant and more subtle than these definable feelings are; — it has almost the force of an impulse; it has no real affinity with the recognizable Past; its visions are archipelagoes which never loomed for us over the heaving of any remembered seas; it is like an unutterable wish to flee away from the Present into the Unknown — a beautiful unknown, radiant with impossible luminosities of azure and sun-gold! I do not know how to account for this impulse — unless as an unexplained Something in man cor-

responding to the instinct of migration in lower forms of life — especially in those happy winged creatures privileged to follow the perfumed Summer round about the world. And I think it comes to us usually either with the first lukewarm burst of spring, or with the windy glories of autumn. Nevertheless, in the morning it came, out of season, and remained with me, while I watched from the balcony birds and ships alike fleeting tropicward with many-colored wings outspread, and thought of a tame crane at home — with one wing hopelessly maimed — that used to cry out bitterly to processions of his wild kindred sailing above the city roofs on their way to other skies.

Why these longings for lands in which we shall never be? — why this desire for that azure into which we cannot soar? — whence our mysterious love for that tumultuous deep into whose emerald secrets we may never peer? Can it be that through countless epochs of the immemorial phylogenesis of man — through all those myriad changes suggested by the prenatal evolution of the human heart — through all the slow marvelous transition from fish to mammal — there have actually persisted impulses, desires, sensations, whereof the enigma may be fully interpreted by some new science only — a future science of psychical dysteleology? . . .

So musing, I found my way to the Plaza.

Has it not often seemed to you that the more an-

tiquated and the more unfamiliar an object or a place is, the more it appears at first sight to live — to possess a sort of inner being, a fetish-spirit, a soul? I thought that morning the ancient Plaza had such a soul, and that it spoke to me in its mysterious dumb way, as if saying: "Come look at me, because I am very, very old; — but do not look at the sulphur fountain which the Americans have made, nor at the monument they have built; for those are not of the centuries to which I belong."

So I entered, and idled awhile among the palms that threw spidery shadows under the noon-light; and I deciphered the old inscription upon the coquina pillar: "PLAZA DE LA CONSTITUCION . . ."; — paying little heed to the song of the artesian spring, and scarcely vouchsafing a furtive glance to the newer monument, which I saw was not artistic, not imposing, but naïve and almost cumbrous. Suddenly my indifferent eye noted a graven word which revealed that the newer structure had been erected by Love, and for Love's sake only. And then, all unexpectedly, the very artlessness of the monument touched me as with a voiceless reproach — touched me like the artlessness of a face in tears: so much of tender pain revealed itself through the simplicity of the chiseled words, "OUR DEAD" — through the commonplaceness of the inscription, "*Erected by the Ladies' Memorial Association.*" Then I walked around the monument, perusing on each of its white faces the roll-call of the dead — sons, brothers, lovers

— the names of your darlings, gentle women of Saint Augustine! I read them every one; carefully spelling out many a Spanish name of Andalusian origin: sonorous appellations holding in their syllables etymological suggestions of Arabian ancestry — names swarthy and beautiful as an Oriental face might be. And all the while — dominating the perfume of blossoms, and the keen sweet scent of aromatic grasses — the sulphureous smell of the volcanic spring came to me grimly through the warm aureate air — like an odor of battles!

There was a name upon that white stone which affected me in a singular way — a name that by contrast with those dark Spanish ones seemed fair, blond as gold! In some place — at some time, I had known that name. — But where? — But when?

Even as a perfume may create for us the spectre of a vanished day, or as a melody may suddenly evoke for us the forgotten tone of some dear voice — so may the sound or sight of a name momentarily revive for us all the faded colors of some memory-portrait so beautiful, so beloved, that we had become afraid to look at it, and had permitted innumerable spiders of Monotony to weave their tintless gauze before its face. But we have had experiences which are now so long dead and so profoundly sepultured in the Cemetery of Recollection that no mnemonic necromancy can lend them recognizable outline; they have become totally spiritualized, and

reveal themselves only as faint wind-stirrings in the atmosphere of Thought.

Surely the experience connected in some vague way with that blond name must have belonged to these: — the memory *had* been; for I knew the presence of its ghost; but viewless it obstinately remained.

It pursued me through the amber afternoon. By some inexplicable mental process I discovered that it had been also associated with an idea of death, a melancholy fancy, at the time, that I had heard or had seen it before. — But when? — But where did I first learn that name? . . . Night came, but brought with it no answer to the enigma.

I watched the moon — a new moon, yellow and curved like a young banana — droop over the dreaming sea: there were sparklings like effervescence through the archway of stars — perhaps the molecular motion of some Astral Thought. Then seemed to fall upon the world a hush like the hush of sanctuaries — like that *Silence of Secrets* told of in the Bhagavad-Gita: the peace of the Immensities. In such hours fancies come to us like gusts of sea-wind — as vast and pure; nay, sometimes vaster — measureless like the interspaces between sun and sun. For it is only in these voiceless moments that the heavens speak to us — telling of mysteries beyond the luminous signaling of astral deep unto astral deep, beyond the farthest burning of constellations; mysteries

that shall still be mysteries when our day-star shall have yielded up his ghost of flame. — The death of a man; the death of a sun: — is the awful Universe affected any more by the last than by the first?

And with this question, the question of the morning returned, enigmatic as before — bringing to me the indescribable, creeping, electrical sensation that we are said to feel especially when some heedless foot is treading the place of our future grave.

It was late when I sought sleep that night — my last Floridian night.

And I dreamed strange dreams.

First, I dreamed of a plant — a plant with sombre cordiform leaves — that *bent away from the light toward me*, and followed me persistently when I retreated from it; crawling like a pet reptile to get in front of me, and then rising up slowly, very slowly; stretching out to me, as with dumb affection, two helpless arms — two long leafy stems tipped with blood-colored flowers.

Then it seemed to me that I stood in a place of burial, and that, in some inexplicable way, I could observe the processes of that dark alchemy by which flesh is transmuted into leaf and fruit — by which blood is transformed into blossom, as in the old Greek myths, and into the living substance also of those creatures, gem-winged, jewel-eyed, that feed upon the juices, the honey, and the fruit of graveyard flora. Then suddenly the mystery of the

blond name again came before me — this time upon a graven square of marble; and in a little while I thought I knew the story of the dead; for this impossible and nameless legend shaped itself in my sleep.

VULTUR AURA

June 2, 188–

... San Juan de los Pinos: — "Saint John of the Pines." That was the name of the ancient fort. And in those days the names of the bastions also were names of the Evangelists and the Apostles.

There is a ghostliness in the name! Why Saint John *of the pines?* Was this low shore beshadowed in the sixteenth century by pines tremendous, immemorial, more ancient than man — through whose colossal aisles the sea-gusts spake with utterance vague and vast as the Wind of the Spirit? Did the roar of the far-off reef, the mutterings of the mighty woods, evoke for Spanish piety dim fancies of the Voices of Patmos, of the Thunders and the Trumpetings?

It was a timber stronghold only — that forgotten fort, thus placed beneath the protection of weird Saint John — a rampart work of pine. Then were discovered the virtues of the coquina — that wonderful shell-rock which seems marble half formed, half crystallized, under the pressure of shallow seas; and out of it was Fort San Marco built — very solidly, very mathematically, very slowly — by the labor of more than a century and the expenditure of thirty millions of good Spanish dollars. Two hundred and fifty years ago they began to build it; to-day it

stands well-nigh as strong as in the time when Oglethorpe's English cannon played on it in vain. Now the profane Americano, who putteth no trust in saints, but in his own strength only, calleth it Fort Marion; and the lizards dwell in it; and the spider weaves her tapestries above its chapel altar; and the dust is deep in the holy-water fonts, where Catholic swordsmen once dipped their sinewy hands. But over the great sally-port you may still discern the Arms of Spain — the Crown, the Shield, the triple turrets of Castile, the rampant Lions of Leon, and, encircling these, the sculptured Order of the Fleece of Gold. Salty winds have chapped the relief; — the fingers of the rain have worn it down as the smooth face of a coin is worn; — the wings of Time have brushed away the edges of the tablet — and besmirched the Fleece of Gold — and obliterated, as in irony, the title of the King, and the beginning of the solemn inscription — REYNANDO EN ESPAÑA. The REY is gone forever! — syllable and potentate! Underneath the pendant Lamb — now black — there are dark stains of drippings — as of blood streaming over the stone. Nothing could be more grotesquely realistic than the sculptured helplessness of that Lamb; yet we may well doubt if he who chiseled it was moved by any spirit of sardonic symbolism — any memory of those Argonauts of the sixteenth century, who found a new Colchis in the West, and a new Fleece, whereof the shearing yielded in less than one generation three hundred tons of gold.

The Arms of Spain

From the Gate of the Old Spanish Fortress at St. Augustine, Florida, now called Ft. Marion

Now the moat is haunted by lizards and lovers only; and there are buzzards upon the sentry towers; and there are bats in the barbican: — it is just sixty-five years since the last Spanish trooper tramped out of the sally-port, never to come back. But squamated as the structure is, the dignity of it imposes awe — the antiquated vastness of it compels respect for the vanished grandeur of Spain; the majesty of its desolation is unspeakable. — I think one feels it most on wild days, when the mighty drum-roll of the breakers is sounded from the harbor bar, and the winds of the Atlantic blow their mad clarions in the barbican, and all the white cavalry of Ocean charge the long coral coast.

. . . A Shadow descends the counterscarp of the sea-battery — passes the covered way — crosses the ditch — mounts the scarp — vanishes beyond the bastions. A moment more and it reappears — still coming from the sea; it is moving in circles with a swift swimming motion, as of an opaqueness floating vaguely in the humors of the eye. Now it is only a passing fleck, a shapeless blot; now it is the phantom of a boat.

Look up, into the brightness — into the violet blaze! — behold him hovering in the splendor of heaven, sailing before the sun, that Kharkas, "dwelling in decay" — whom the Parsee reveres. (For 't is written that even the flitting of his shadow over the faces of the dead driveth out the unclean spirit that

entereth into corpses.) "From the height of his highest flight he discerneth if there be upon the ground a morsel of flesh not bigger than a hand; and for his comfort the odor of musk hath been created underneath his wing." — How magnificent his soaring! — yet the vast pinions never beat; they veer only with his wheeling — sometimes presenting to the meridian their whole black banner-breadth — sometimes offering only the sabre-curves of their edges. He seems to float by volition alone — to swim the deeps of day without effort. Higher and higher he mounts into the abyss of light; now he seems to hang beside the sun! — now he is only a whirling speck! — now he is gone! — My field-glass brings him again into view for a moment — sailing, circling, spiring by turns; but once more he dwindles into a mote, not bigger than a tiny flake of soot, which rises up, up, up, and vanishes away at last into luminous eternities unfathomable. Yet from those invisible heights his eye still scans the face of the land and the features of men — that wondrous eye far reaching as a beam of daylight. "There is a path," saith Job, "which no fowl knoweth, *and which the eye of the vulture hath not seen.*" — But that path lies not open to the gaze of the sun; for whatsoever earthly thing the day-star hath looked upon, that thing the ken of the vulture also hath discerned. Rightly, therefore, hath the eye of the vulture been mythologically likened unto the eye of deities and of demons. Was not the sacred symbol of Isis, the Impenetrably

Veiled — Isis, mother of Gods, "Eye of the Sun," who by the quivering of her feathers createth light, who by the beating of her wings createth spirit — a Golden Vulture, the saving emblem hung about the throat of the dead? And the vultures of the Vedic prayer to Indra, all-seeing demons; great sun-vultures of the Sanscrit epic, demi-gods. By vision alone it was given the bird Gatayus to know the past, the present, and that which was to come; for, encompassing the world in his flight, all things were discerned by his gaze.

O ghoul of the empyrean, well doth thy brother, the shadow-caster of deserts, know the time of the going and the coming of the caravans; and he maketh likewise each year the pilgrimage to the tomb of the Prophet! — Thy cousins sit upon the Towers of Silence; and the charnel-pits of the dakhmas have no secrets for them! From the eternal silences of heaven — from the heights that are echoless and never reached by human cry — progenitors of thine have watched the faces of the continents wrinkle in the revolution of centuries; they have looked down upon the migrations of races; they have witnessed the growth and the extinction of nations; they have read the crimson history of a hundred thousand wars.

Another shadow crosses my feet — and yet another passes; the orbits of their circlings intercross. Hanging above the dark fort, those black silhouettes

cutting sharply athwart the azure seem grimly appropriate to this desolation. Doubtless the birds have haunted the coast for centuries. The Spaniard, who gave many a rich feast of eyes and hearts, has passed away; — the Vulture remains, and waits. For what? — is it for some vomit of the spuming sea — some putrefaction of the buzzing shambles? — or does he, indeed, still hope, even after the passing of three hundred years, *for the return of Menendez?*

CREOLE PAPERS

QUAINT NEW ORLEANS AND ITS HABITANTS

I. FRENCH-TOWN

OLD New Orleans proper (French-Town, as it is termed by steamboatmen; Le Carré, as its own inhabitants call it) is principally, though not wholly, comprised in the great quadrilateral bounded by Canal, Esplanade, Rampart, and Old Levee Streets. Where the horse-cars now run upon those thoroughfares formerly stood the bastioned walls of the colonial city, encircled by a deep moat. Double rows of trees now mark the old rampart lines upon three sides of the quadrilateral, and birds sing in their branches at just the height where brazen cannon once showed their black throats, where Swiss or Spanish sentries paced to and fro against the sky. Within the Carré the streets are serried, solid, and picturesque. Memories of aristocratic wealth still endure in certain vast mansions, broad-balconied and deep-courted, now mostly converted into hotels or lodging-houses, half the year void of guests; but the majority of the dwellings are rather curious than splendid. Nearly all the larger ones are built in the form of an L, the lower line of the letter representing the street front, the upper line a shallow but lofty wing reaching far back from the main building at right angles, and flanked by an enormous green

or brown cistern as by a round tower. A really imposing archway often pierces the street facade — giving carriageway into the deep court — much like those quaint archways characteristic of old London taverns. Such a building often possesses three sets of stairways — invariably two — one for the main edifice, one for the wing. But these immense winter residences, once sheltering a population of servants and clients large as that comprised in the Roman *familia*, are now for the most part in a state of decay. There is much crumbling of woodwork, looseness of jointing, ulcerous exposure of the brick skeleton where plaster has rotted away in patches from piazza pillars and from the ribs of archways. Grass struggles up between the flagging; microscopic fungi patch the wall surfaces with sickly green. The semi-tropical forces of Nature in the South are mighty to destroy the work of man. Dismally romantic is the Greek front upon Toulouse Street, in rear of the old Hôtel Saint Louis, and once famous as "The Planters' Bank." Through cracks in the high board fence erected about its desolation one may see the weeds squeezing their way through the joints of its broad stone steps, the green creepers wriggling round its columns, and bushes actually growing from the angles of its pediment — a vegetation planted, doubtless, by birds. This ruin has a veritable classic dignity — a melancholy that is antique. Sorrowful likewise are the voiceless courts of the once beautiful French hotel, with their void galleries above and

dried-up fountains below. Millions upon millions have changed hands within that building; princely revels were held there of old by the feudal lords of Louisiana; the splendors of the past linger in the tarnished gilding and dying colors of the lofty apartments, and in the decorations of the porcelain dome frescoed by Casanova.

Many of the French and Spanish dwellings are as full of architectural mysteries and surprises as the Castle of Otranto — corridors that serpentine, stairways that leap from building to building, cabinets masked in the recesses of dormer-windows, curious covered bridges worthy of Venice. Looking up or down one of these streets, the eye is astonished by the long patchwork of colors motley as Joseph's coat, ultimately fading off into grayish-blues where the vista meets the horizon. Under the golden glow of the sun these tints take delightful warmth; there are chrome and gamboge yellows, deep-sea greens, ashen pinks, brick reds, chocolates, azures, blazing whites, all trimmed with the intenser green of iron balconies and the antiquated window-shutters folded back against the wall. The old French opera-house I have seen painted in a peculiarly pleasing hue, to which a summer sun would lend the mellowness of antique marble. It was a ripe-ivorine tint, with just the faintest conceivable flush of pink; it was a warm and human color — it was the color of Creole flesh!

Speaking of it recalls the curious statement of

divers writers to the effect that the skin of the West Indian Creole feels cooler than that of a European or American from the Northern States. The same is true of the Louisiana Creole; the vigorous European or Northerner who touches a Creole hand during the burning hours of a July or August day has reason to be surprised at its coolness — such a coolness as tropical fruits retain even under the perpendicular fires of an equatorial sun.

II. THE CREOLES

WHEN an educated resident of New Orleans speaks of the Creoles he must be understood as referring to the descendants of the early Latin colonists, the posterity of those French and Spanish settlers who founded or ruled Louisiana. The diminutive "criollo," derived from the Spanish "criar," "to beget," primarily signified the colonial-born child of European blood, as distinguished from the offspring of the Conquistadores by slave women, whether Indian or African. Nothing could be more etymologically antithetical, therefore, than the phrase "colored Creoles," although it has obtained considerable currency as a convenient term to distinguish those colored people who can claim a partly Latin origin, from the plainer "American" colored folk who have neither French nor Spanish blood in their veins, and to whom the Creole dialect is supremely unintelligible. Among the colored population of lighter tint, moreover, the characteristics of the Latin blood

show themselves so strongly that the popular use of the term distinguishing them from ordinary types of mulatto, quadroon, quinteroon, or octoroon appears justifiable.

What old Bryan Edwards, in his excellent but obsolete "History of the British West Indies," wrote concerning the Creoles of the Antilles, largely applies to the Creoles of Louisiana likewise, especially in relation to their physical characteristics. In whatever part of the civilized Temperate Zone pronounced, the very word "Creole" conveys to the hearer fancies tropical as the poetry of Baudelaire; to the imagination of well-informed readers the Creole invariably appears as a person of European blood corporeally and morally modified by the influences of a torrid climate. Whether we hear of the English Creoles of the West Indian, East Indian, or West African colonies, the French Creoles of Algeria, Martinique, or Senegal, or the Dutch Creoles of Malabar, the name invariably provokes fancies of burning suns, of monstrous vegetation, of nights lighted by the Southern Cross. In New Orleans we are only at the Gate of the Tropics; sometimes our orange-trees shiver in frosty winds, our rare palms droop in January colds. But the climate is torrid enough, nevertheless, to have produced marked physical changes in the native white population of Louisiana during the lapse of generations. It has modified the osteogeny of the true Creoles almost as remarkably as in Martinique or Trinidad; it has

greatly deepened the eye-sockets to shelter the sight from the furnace glow of summer heat; it has made limbs suppler, extremities more delicate; and to these changes wrought in the body's framework is wholly attributable that languid and singular grace which distinguishes the Louisianaise among her fairer American sisters. Creole eyes — the eyes that tantalized Gottschalk into the musical utterances of "Ojos Criollos" — are large, luminous, liquidly black, deeply fringed, and their darkness is strangely augmented by the uncommon depth of the orbit. The pilose system — to use anatomical phraseology — is richly developed; the women have magnificent hair, and Creole beards and mustaches are usually very handsome. Formerly the Louisiana Creoles excelled in exercises demanding grace and quickness of eye; they were fine dancers and famous swordsmen — indeed, the art of fencing is not yet lost among them. The beauty of the women is peculiar; they possess a sveltesse — a slender elegance that is very fascinating; but to Northerners they seem fragile of physique, more delicate than they really are. A rosy face, a bright, fresh complexion, is rarely seen among them; they have an ivorine tint, a convalescent pallor, that contrasts oddly with the fire of their dark pupils and the lustrous blackness of their hair. When the tint is darker — a Spanish swarthiness — the effect is less strange. Creole blonds are few.

The Creole temperament is one of great nervous sensibility; phlegmatic characters are anomalies; a

disposition to violent extremes of anger or affection is often masked by an exterior appearance of listless indifference. The climate itself (nine months of summer heat, three of snowless chill, long periods of heavy calm, broken by storms of extraordinary and splendid violence — a climate enervating, fitful, luxuriant) has reflected its characteristics in the native population. The mind develops precociously, blossoms richly. There are few educated Creoles who cannot speak two or three languages well; many speak more; and the writer has known one who was almost a Mezzofanti. Love of the mother-country is not dead among the Creoles, and their attachment to ancient French customs has but little abated. Their home life has scarcely changed during a century, although they are becoming less socially exclusive. Nevertheless, the Northern stranger invited to visit the home of a Creole family may even now consider himself the subject of a rare compliment. Such a visit, however, will scarcely be made within the limits of the old colonial city, for the Creoles are no longer there. They have moved away to newer districts north and south — away from the decaying streets and the crumbling cemeteries — out to quiet suburbs where the air is sweet with breath of jasmine flowers and orange-blossoms, out to dreamy Bayou Saint Jean, where clusters of white-pillared cottages slumber in green. They have mostly abandoned the Carré to the European Latins — French emigrants from

the Mediterranean coasts, Italians, Sicilians, Spaniards, Greeks; to the population of the French Market, the venders of fruits and meats; to the keepers of what Sala called "absurd little shops"; and especially to the French-speaking element of color, which still clings to the ruined Past with something of the strange affection that erst subsisted between master and slave.

How long will even that ruined Past endure? The somnolent quiet of the old streets is being already broken by the energetic bustle of American commerce; the Northern Thor is already threatening the picturesque town with iconoclastic hammer. Colossal capital advances menacingly from the southern side, showing the sheet-lightning of its gold. One huge firm has already devoured a whole square, and extended itself into four streets at once, cruciform-wise, like a Greek basilica. Even the old Napoleon First furniture sets, the massive four-pillared beds, the ponderous cabinets curiously carved, the luxuriant fauteuils, the triple-footed tables — all these solid households gods which stood upon eagle feet of gilded brass — are being bought up by shrewd speculators and sent North, to fetch prices which no one here would dream of paying. Perhaps the antique life will make its last rally about the old Place d'Armes (Plaza de Armas), in the vicinity of the quaint cathedral, under the shadow of those towers whose bells for a hundred years have rung diurnally for the repose of the soul

of Don André Almonaster Roxas, Knight of the Royal and Distinguished Spanish Order of Charles III, Regidor and Alferez-Real of His Most Catholic Majesty. So long as the iron tongues of those bells can speak, so long as the iron heart of the great tower-clock shall beat, something of the old life and the old faith must live in the Creole quarter. Long after most of the quaint architecture shall have disappeared, I fancy those two massive Spanish edifices, the old Cabildo and Casa Curial, will still remain standing upon either side of the cathedral, like grim soldiery guarding a commissary of the Holy Inquisition. The Spaniard builded well: after the lapse of nearly a hundred years, those rugged edifices testify grandly to the solid Roman character of their creators. The plaster may peel from the stout pillars of their arcades; but dilapidation only adds nobility to their quaintness; they are dignified by the scars of their battle with Time; they are imposing without loftiness; they are superb without artifice — deep-shouldered, thick-set, broad-backed, firm upon their feet, like veteran troops, like the splendid Spanish infantry of three hundred years ago.

CREOLE WOMEN IN THE FRENCH WEST INDIES

I

ALTHOUGH it is generally well known that the condition of woman in most Latin countries is one of comparative seclusion — totally different from that existence of large freedom she enjoys in English or American communities — some romantic misconception prevails regarding her life in the Latin tropics. Fiction, painting, and poetry have combined to create a false ideal of that life — to make the word "Creole" suggest many happy, dreamy, luminous things. Not altogether are the artists and romance-writers at fault, nevertheless: their purpose has been only to reflect something of Nature's magic in the zones of eternal summer; and no art and no words could transcend the splendor that was their inspiration. He who has once seen tropic Nature under a tropic sun has received a revelation: there will come to him, if he has a heart, with a new strange meaning — also eternal and true — the words of John — voiced perpetually from the purple peaks, and the undying woods, and sapphire glory of sea and sky: "This is the message which we announce unto you, that God is LIGHT!"

Light! — no one dwelling in the cities of the North may ever imagine the possibilities of light and

of color in the equatorial world. And he who has once known them must continue forever enchanted — must feel, after departure from them, like an exile from Paradise. The poetry of the tropics is born of such regret. Romance and song are essentially imaginative; and that which surpasses and satiates imagination does not directly stimulate their production: it is only as an exile that the Creole becomes a poet, when he remembers the charm of his country without the pains of its daily life. There is no more touching incident, perhaps, in literary history, than the fate of Léonard, the poet of Guadeloupe. His youth had been mostly spent abroad in struggles to obtain the means of returning to his native island. Succeeding after intense strain, he returned to find himself only a victim of the revolution of 1789 — threatened with death if he persisted in remaining. His friends hurried him on board a vessel; but, although he had been already wounded and pursued by an assassin, he could not nerve himself to go. Again and again he left the ship, and only with the greatest difficulty could he be persuaded at last to remain on board. But nostalgia had brought him to the condition of a dying man before his arrival in France. At Nantes he tried to reëmbark, hoping at least to die in his beloved island; but he expired before the ship could sail.

Tropical Nature is indeed an enchantress; but she does more than bewitch, she transforms body and soul. She satisfies the senses, and numbs the aspira-

tions; she lulls the higher faculties to sleep while gratifying, as nowhere else, the physical wants of life. It has been often said that human happiness has a certain fixed measure in all conditions of existence: the quality may vary, the capacity for each individual remains the same. Such a belief would seem to have its confirmation in the conditions of tropical society. The pleasures of intellectual life become almost impossible in a climate where the least mental effort provokes drowsiness, and the middle of each day is devoted to sleep; nor can the dazzling spectacle of tropical vegetation under tropical skies wholly compensate the enervating effect of an atmosphere hot and heavy as the air of a Turkish bath. Social existence, so circumstanced, becomes of necessity both indolent and provincial; and the enchantment of the tropics should prove irresistible only to strangers able and willing to dream life away, and to abandon all gifts of civilization so hardly earned by Northern struggle. And one must know this, to guess how far from enviable is the life of white women even in the English tropics, where there is at least an effort to maintain the social customs of the mother country. But in the old Latin colonies of the Pacific and the West Indies, woman's life has always been narrowed by formal customs which no American or English girl could well resign herself to endure.

II

TIME seems to have moved very slowly in the old French colonies. In the streets of Martinique or Réunion or Marie-Galante or Guadeloupe, one almost seems to live in the seventeenth century — so little have architecture or customs been modified in two or three hundred years. The great changes effected by the abolition of slavery are not immediately discernible to a stranger; the free blacks and people of color, forming the mass of the population, still cling to the simple and bright attire of other days, and seem to hold almost the same relation to white colonial life as hired servants that they formerly held as slaves. Emancipation, republicanism, and education have not yet abolished the old manners, nor greatly modified the Creole speech. Could Josephine arise from the dust of her rest to revisit her Martinique birthplace, she would find so little changed at Trois-Islets, that except for the saucier manner of the younger negroes, she could scarcely surmise the new republican conditions. And the modern life of the Creole woman, though less luxurious than in the previous century of colonial prosperity, varies otherwise little from that of her great-great-grandmother.

Her birth is announced with antique formality in the colonial papers, and duly registered in the "Archives de la Marine." She is christened in the twilight of some colonial baptistery, where silhouettes

of palm-heads quiver behind stained-glass windows; and receives those half-dozen names — names of angels, or saints, alternated with names of ancestors — by which every white Creole child is ushered into the world. Then some comely black or brown woman, dazzlingly robed in bright colors, and covered with barbaric jewelry, carries her on a silken cushion from house to house that all of family kin may kiss her. Always through the recollections of her childhood there will smile back to her the memory of that kind swart face — the face of her black nurse, of her da. It is the da who bathes her, feeds her, dresses her, lulls her to sleep with song: doubtless for a time she believes the dark woman her mother. It is the da who first takes her out into the beautiful world of the tropics — shows her the mighty azure circle of the sea, and the coming and going of the ships, and the peaks with their circling clouds, and the whispering gold of cane-fields, and the palms, and the jewel-feathered humming birds. It is the black nurse who first teaches her to kiss — to utter the words "Manman," "Da," "Papoute" — to express her infant thoughts in the softest cooing speech uttered by human lips — the Creole tongue. It is the da also who first thrills her child-fancy into blossom with stories of the impossible, and who stimulates her musical sense by teaching her strange songs — melodies borne with slavery into the Indies from Senegal or the Coast of Gold.

Growing older, the little one is gradually sepa-

rated from her da, is taught to speak French, to submit to many formal restraints, is finally sent — while still a mere child — to some convent school. She leaves it only on arriving at womanhood. Perhaps during those years she sees her parents every regular visiting day, and during the brief Christmas vacations; but she is practically separated otherwise from them as much as if imprisoned — though they may be living only a few streets away. If they are very rich, she may be sent away to France. In the latter event she may acquire accomplishments superior to those imparted in any colonial convent; but the education in other respects is very simple and old-fashioned: the chief result aimed at in the training of girls being moral and religious rather than secular. The pensionnaires of the colonial convents wear a very plain uniform — a straight-falling dress of sombre color, belted at the waist, and a broad straw hat. The different classes are distinguished by long narrow ribbons crossed over breast and back and tied round the waist below, the ends being left to stream down at one side. One class wears blue ribbons; another pink; another white. Altogether the uniform is ugly; it gives an aspect of clumsiness which is quite foreign to the Creole race. Nothing could seem more uninteresting than a procession of convent girls on their way to church, escorted by nuns. But this is only the chrysalis stage of Creole girl-life: the beautiful butterfly will be revealed when that sombre uniform is abandoned forever.

At seventeen or eighteen the Creole girl returns home, with a large package of class prizes — mostly publications of Mame & Cie. — showy volumes of a semi-religious character — with a few books of travel, perhaps, added, which have been carefully perused and recommended as safe reading by some ecclesiastical censor. A private party is given in her honor; and she makes her début into Creole society. Her life, thereafter, however, would not, by American girls at all events, be thought enviable. She rarely leaves home, except to pay a visit to some relatives, or to go to church under the escort of some member of the family, or some old lady chosen to accompany her. She is scarcely ever seen upon the streets. The pleasures of shopping are denied her. Whatever she needs is purchased for her by male relatives, or by her hired maid — who selects at the store such merchandise as may be desired, and carries a stock of samples to the house in a tray balanced upon her head. There the decision is made, the chosen articles retained, and the remainder carried back to the merchant, who in due time sends in his bill. There are no evening parties or visitings; the active life of the colony ends with sundown; all retire between eight and nine o'clock, and rise with dawn. Except during the brief theatrical season, and on the annual occasion of a carnival ball given by select society, there are no evening amusements. The discipline of the convent has prepared the young girl for this secluded existence; but

were it not for the intense heat of the climate, she would probably suffer, in spite of such preparation, from the monotony of her life. Happily for her, she remains as innocent of other conditions of society as she is ignorant of all evil; and the tenderness of her mother or other relatives does all that can be done to render her existence happy. Still, she sometimes regrets her convent-days — the liberty of play-hours in the open court, with its palms and sabliers: she likes to revisit the nuns occasionally, to get a glimpse of the pupils amusing themselves as she used to do — secretly wishes, perhaps, that she were a child again. But she has yet no idea how often she will wish that wish before they robe her all in black, and put her away to sleep forever somewhere in the colonial cemetery, under the tall palms.

All about her young life glimmer conventional bars: she is a caged bird, vaguely desiring liberty, without a suspicion of what perils liberty might bring. Her pleasures, her ideas, her emotions are still those of a child — even on the day when her mother, kissing her, first whispers to her some news that makes her flush to her hair. She has been spoken for! A gentleman, whom she scarcely knows even as a visitor, has demanded her hand. Could she love him? She does not know; she is willing to do whatever her mother deems best. They meet thereafter more frequently — but always as before in the salon, in the presence of the family: there is no wooing; there are no private walks and talks; there is,

in short, no romance in Creole courtship; — everything is arranged and determined by the heads of both families. Her betrothal is circulated as a piece of private news throughout society; but no printed mention of it is ever made. Finally the notary is called, and the marriage contract drawn up, after a strictly business manner; she has rarely anything to do with these preliminaries, but the future husband, if a man of the world, will be careful to read the contract very attentively, and to discuss its provisions, point by point. It is, in fact, a decided weakness to omit these formal considerations of the financial side of marriage. More than one proud or sensitive man has had reason late in life to regret the impulse of trust or affection which caused him to sign his marriage contract without examining it. But the fiancée had nothing to do with this: she is content to leave her parents to make every possible effort to secure her material happiness.

Marriage opens to her a larger sphere of life. She can go out freely, visit friends, entertain relatives at her home, and — in these more recent years — even occasionally enter stores. But such comparative freedom has its disadvantages. It involves a round of social duties more or less wearisome — visits during the heated hours of the day, and the wearing of black, close-fitting Parisian dresses in an atmosphere and under a sun more difficult to endure than any summer conditions of the temperate zone. Probably she feels relieved when at a later day the cares of her

household and children enable her to excuse herself from taking further part in active social life; and thereafter she rarely leaves home, except to go to church.

III

For more than two centuries such has been the monotonous, half-cloistered existence of Creole women in the French colonies. Such a life might have been Josephine's had she wedded a merchant or planter of Martinique, instead of a soldier. In the past century and before it, slavery and wealth made the existence of the Creole woman more luxurious: there were more social pleasures for her also — more parties, receptions, amusements — especially in the capital, Fort Royal, where the Governor held a veritable court. Furthermore, the flower of Creole society passed much of its time at Paris, and exercised some influence in the Métropole. But in the colony proper, the Creole girl has no free joyous girlhood, no prospect of larger liberty save through marriage, and no romance of love. Yet, notwithstanding these apparent disadvantages, the demoiselles of the last century were famed throughout the world for their charm of manner and singular beauty.

Climate and other tropical conditions had quite transformed the colonial race within a few generations, changing not only complexion and temperament, but the very shape of the skeleton — lengthening the limbs, making delicate the extremities,

deepening the orbits to protect the eye from the immense light. The Creole became more lithe and refined of aspect than the European parent — taller but more slender — more supple, though less strong; and that grace which is the particular characteristic of Latin blood would seem to have obtained its utmost possible physical expression in the women of Martinique. The colony was justly proud of them; their reputation abroad had become romantic; and legends of their witchery were being circulated the world over. So much was their influence feared that the home government passed a special law forbidding any of its colonial officials to marry Creoles, lest the discharge of diplomatic duties should be directed by some charming woman's will, rather than by the will of the sovereign. Yet, in a few years more, a Creole woman was to share the throne of the first Napoleon, and sway the destinies of Europe by her gentle counsel — that Josephine de la Pagerie, of Trois-Islets, whose memory lives in the beautiful marble statue erected in the Savane of Fort-de-France, by the citizens of the colony.

IV

THERE is another Martinique memory, which one cannot pass over in speaking of the Creole beauties of former days. Robert, a tiny village on the southeast coast, has a legend which once gave it quite as much distinction as Trois-Islets. Robert, or at least one of its suburbs, claimed to be the birthplace of

another lovely Creole, who became, it was alleged, no less a personage than the Sultana-Validé of Selim III. More than one historian seems to have given credit to this story; M. Sidney Daney, in his "Histoire de la Martinique," even published her portrait, with the inscription beneath: "Aimé Dubuc De Rivéry, Sultana-Validé, et mère de Mahmoud II."

A pretty face, with hair powdered and combed back after the early fashion of the eighteenth century, and that soft roundness of lines suggesting the ripeness of sixteen years — when the slender child is just passing into the beauty of womanhood.

The legend is said to have inspired a novel, which I was not able to find in the colony; it is perhaps long out of print. The pages of M. Sidney Daney,[1] who treats the story as an historical event, probably form the best authority for it. According to this writer Mademoiselle Aimée Dubuc Dérivry was born on the Pointe Royale plantation at Robert in December, 1766 — three years later than Josephine. She was the child of one of the oldest and most distinguished Creole families of Martinique. She was sent to France at an early age to be educated, and passed several years in a convent school at Nantes. At the age of eighteen she was called home, and embarked from the same port in charge of a governess. The vessel was attacked and captured by an Alge-

[1] *Histoire de la Martinique, depuis la colonization jusqu'en* 1815. Par M. Sidney Daney, Membre du Conseil Colonial de la Martinique. Fort-Royal: 1844. See vol. IV, p. 234.

rian corsair, and Aimée, her governess, and other passengers were taken to Algiers and sold as slaves. The beauty of the young Creole attracted the notice of the Dey, who, desiring to gain the friendship of the Sultan, bought the girl and sent her as a present to Selim III at Constantinople. There, it was alleged, she became first the favorite, and afterward Sultana-Validé — as the mother, in 1785, of Mahmoud II, who ascended the Ottoman throne in 1808. Such is the legend, in its briefest possible form.

To those familiar with Turkish history, the narrative is palpably absurd. But it is still believed in the colony, notwithstanding its disproval by a more careful writer than Daney — M. Pierre Régis Dessalles, in a note attached to one of the chapters of his "Annales du Conseil Souverain de la Martinique." [1] Dessalles, disciplined to exactitude by his legal profession, never set down a statement without thorough examination of fact, and had to aid him all the "Archives de la Marine" — among which are preserved in France all important colonial documents, since climate and insects render the perfect conservation of papers impossible in the tropics. From these he found the history of the De Rivéry, or Dérivry family — the latter spelling being the official one. The father was Henri Jacob Dubuc Dérivry, of the parish of Robert, who married (24th May, 1773) Demoiselle Marie Anne Arbousset, be-

[1] Vol. II, pp. 285, 286.

longing to a family illustrious in Martinique history. By this marriage he had three children:

1. Marie-Anne, born April 5, 1774; died November 28, 1775.

2. Rose-Henriette-Germaine, born February 6, 1778. There is no documentary evidence in existence as to what became of Rose-Henriette-Germaine. This is probably the girl alleged to have entered the seraglio at Constantinople, and to have had her brother (captured with her) created a pasha — Mehemet-Ali, father of Ibrahim Pasha.

3. Marie-Alexandrine-Louise-Victoire, born June 24, 1780, and married January 15, 1806, to a Monsieur Malet.

Thus the legend evaporates! Allowing for the precocity of Creole women, it is still quite evident that, as Rose-Henriette-Germaine was born February 6, 1778, and the Sultan Mahmoud (her alleged son!) on July 20, 1785, the story is impossible according to the records, which allow an interval of only twelve years between the marriage of M. Dérivry and the birth of Mahmoud, at which time Rose could have been only seven or eight years old. M. Daney says she was born at Robert, December 1, 1755; but M. Dérivry was married only in 1773. Furthermore, Mahmoud II was not the son of Selim III! Yet, in spite of these hard facts, the legend is still believed; the colony still boasts of its Aimée Dérivry as a mother of Sultans; and faded manuscript documents — some of which I have read, and copied

myself — are shown to strangers as proof of the romantic story.

All that is certain is that about a hundred years ago some young Creole girl of the Dubuc family was sent to France for her education, and was never seen again by her parents; that many strange stories were related accounting for the mystery of her disappearance, some cruel, some improbable, all false; that her relatives went to Europe and spent years in vain efforts to discover a trace of her; and that meanwhile there sprang up this legend of her fate, still told with pride to strangers in the colony, over a glass of sugar syrup and rum, by hospitable planters.

V

But though the old order of Creole life remains almost unchanged, that life has shrunk into much smaller channels, and has undergone many modifications. The wealth and indolent luxury of the eighteenth century have become memories. The influence of the race upon home politics has totally ceased. The race itself is rapidly disappearing from the islands. Except among the few survivors of the old régime you may now seek in vain for that proud, fine type of valiant and vigorous manhood, once the honor of colonial France. With the abolition of slavery and the introduction of universal suffrage, the new social conditions became almost unbearable for the formerly dominant class — with its intense conservatism. Naturally the men of strong individ-

uality suffered most in the hopeless war of race prejudice and race politics provoked by a too speedy conferring of political rights upon a population of slaves; and the more energetic whites found themselves forced to emigrate elsewhere. Those powerful characters who had given the old Creole life all its dignity and stability vanished from the scene; and the remnant of the whites softened down into that condition of dull, inert, flaccid existence which is their portion to-day. The social conditions of the time of the monarchy have been, indeed, almost reversed: the dark population, multiplying with wonderful rapidity ever since emancipation, is crowding the white population out of the islands; and the former slave race is now politically the dominant one. It seems more than possible that the white Creole race will have disappeared from all the French West Indies within a few more generations — certainly from Martinique.

How much the Creole white woman has suffered in this race contest may only be understood by those long familiar with colonial life. With the decline of caste dignity and caste prosperity her existence necessarily becomes more and more narrowed, and her future vaguer in its promises of happiness. Something of her present life may be divined from its invisibility; still more from the fact that it is dominated by a religious influence which strictly regulates and limits her diversions, her reading, and the boundaries of her knowledge. She has lost that

graceful haughtiness once the particular characteristic of her race; she has also, perhaps, lost something of that aristocratic gift of fine tact which formerly distinguished her as a daughter of statesmen; she is becoming something of a bourgeoise. Her chances in life are also growing cruelly small. Probably the white female population now considerably exceeds the male; yet weddings are infrequent, and their number yearly grows less. Among the modern Creoles, the size of a girl's dowry has most to do with influencing a match; marriages are rather dependent upon business considerations and social connections in relation to business prospects, than upon mutual affection. It was not so in the old days: marriage was then regarded as a social duty; and even the laxity of tropical morals in slave times rarely prevented any man from fulfilling that social duty, and abandoning all reckless living after a certain age. The change in colonial ideas in this respect has been attributed to moral degeneracy — to class conservatism in Creole relations with the foreign element — to various other causes. It is simply the result of poverty! The old conditions were wholly artificial — wholly based upon the institution of slavery, supported by a strong monarchical government; and the true character of that structure is now being revealed by the fact that the white race cannot hold its own in the colonies.

Only those who remember monarchical times can decide how far the Creole girl has been changed by

the new conditions; the foreigner, of course, has few opportunities for observing her. Does she still possess that exotic charm which in other years lifted her to the throne of empire, and inspired that exquisite white dream in marble which still stands in the Savannah of Fort-de-France — between the Rivière Madame and the Rivière Monsieur? Does she still keep that fine witchery which frightened the foolish Métropole long ago into the utterance of the law that no French official in the colonies should marry a Creole? I do not know. But it is sadly true that she is bearing more than her share of the penalty for the errors made by her fathers in the past — those errors of slavery, that have not yet been expiated. And it is also true that many a fair proud girl — perhaps more than one with princely blood in her veins — seeks escape at last from the dull formality of an aimless and hopeless existence, by returning forever to the convent of her child-days; knowing nothing of the higher joys or deeper pains of life, and so the more innocently eager to transmute into religious ecstasy and penance that strength of love and that divine desire of self-sacrifice for some one's sake which are attributes of woman's soul.

ARABESQUES

ARABIAN WOMEN

ALTHOUGH sensitiveness to beauty — the æsthetic sense — is not in itself a capacity by which the comparative civilization of races may be fully estimated, it is at least an indication of the possession of powers which under favoring circumstances would enable the people possessing it to occupy a high rank in the hierarchy of nations. When found among semi-savage peoples, it gives us the right to believe that such peoples have been or might yet be the founders of civilizations; and in these days, when the study of Oriental history and ethnology is making such rapid progress, especial interest attaches to the evidences of the æsthetic sense in the earliest literature of the nations of the East. In this regard, no Oriental literature possesses so natural a charm as that of the Arabs — particularly, perhaps, from the fact that in it is preserved every link in the history of the wonderful evolution of the æsthetic sense — from the primitive desert-chant to the elaborate literature of the Golden Prime of Islam — from the first camel-skin tents to the glories of Saracenic architecture in Spain and India — from the simplicity of nomad life between sand and sun, to the luxurious era of El Rashid and El Mamoun, of which the memory still lingers in the world like a breath of perfume, like a golden afterglow, like the throbbing in the brain

after some wondrous music has died away. This literature is vast and variform; it were useless to attempt in any limited space to speak, even of the titles of its main branches — or even to touch ever so lightly upon those branches which deal especially with the sense of the beautiful. But the memory of the student, culling here and there a blossom of the poetical flora whose odor is most grateful to his special literary sense, can at least present the reader with a bouquet of fancies curious enough to interest if not beautiful enough, perhaps, to charm. If there be any particular subject the poetical treatment of which is the best evidence of the æsthetic sense, it is the beauty of woman — and we confine our gleanings to this particular domain.

From time immemorial, before the coming of Mahomet, the desert Arabs were wont not only to honor poets highly, but to hold periodical assemblies at which poetical contests took place, the contestants being stimulated by the promise of a prize or the signal honor of having their compositions hung up in the precincts of the temples as almost-inspired masterpieces. Six out of the many victors at these ante-Islamic poetical exhibitions obtained such fame that their names are still familiar to all the desert-tribes, and their poems have been preserved for us almost unchanged — marvelous specimens of simple, beautiful, but savage genius. Naturally the field of the desert-poet had but little variation;

his subjects were few and simple — the fine qualities of thoroughbred horses or camels, the triumph of battle, the lament of defeat, the joy of the chase, the beauty of a mistress. This very limitation of subject, together with the monotonous sameness of nomad life in all ages and as far as the sands extend, by increasing the difficulty of the art, renders its charming expression more wonderful to modern minds. To describe the beauty of woman, the modern poet can summon to his aid the whole art of civilization, the varied knowledge of three thousand years, the charm of all things that charm — jewels, music, flowers, birds, ivories of China and the Indies, colors of the Pacific, Greek and Etruscan arts, the melody and passion of a hundred wonderful languages. The Arab, knowing no language but his own, seeing ever about him the yellow waste, above him the unvarying blue — ignorant of all arts save those of war and the chase — was able to create masterpieces of language which the most learned men of our own day cannot speak of without admiration — poems virile, supple, ardent as the desert itself and as sun-colored. Translations of these are now printed in most European languages.

Symbolism, so infinitely rich in the nineteenth century, was necessarily meagre in the deserts of Arabia before the advent of Mahomet, and the Arab lover knew of but few things to which he might compare the beauty of her he loved: comely animals and simple objects familiar to dwellers in tents consti-

tuted the bulk of his poetical stock of similes. In the neighborhood of the cities he might see other objects suited to the evocation of graceful fancies, as when he compared the loosened tresses of an Arab girl falling over her face, to "the graceful drooping of the flexible vine over its trellis-work." But he generally confined his symbolism to desert-subjects — the palm, the ostrich, the gazelle, the wild cattle of the stony hills, the antelopes — the weapons of his people; for in all countries the eyebrow of the fair has ever been Love's bow, her gaze its arrows, her glance their barbed points that may not be readily withdrawn from the heart.

Strange some of these Arab comparisons of beauty seem, yet they are never uncouth, never commonplace or feeble. "Graceful her waist as a nabak-branch; elegant her stature as a palm," says one who had never heard the words of Solomon. Another compares the beauties of Nahous to ostriches, with good effect: "The girls of the neighborhood of Nahous have made thee sick for love by reason of their cadenced walk; measured their steps are like those of the ostrich." All the Arabian poets have alternately compared the eyes of their women to those of the wild antelope, the gazelle, or the desert cow — sharing the last mentioned simile with Homer. Nor was the nomad troubadour ashamed to compare the graces of his beloved to those of a fine steed. "My beauty," cries El-Acha, "slenderly

graceful as a young mare, lithe of flank! . . . the curves of her bosom are as the curves of heaven aglow with light. . . . Woman enchantress! were she but to lean a moment on the body of a dead man, surely he would arise again!" Another sings of captive maidens "beautiful as wild desert cows." Nabiga, one of the greatest of the early poets, is fond of a similar comparison, but uses also the gazelle as a more graceful symbol: "She hath gazed upon thee with the gaze of a young gazelle, tame, swarthy of hue, sable-eyed and decked with a necklace of strung pearls."

But aside from mere poetical comparisons, we find the Arabs had a well-ordinated law of beauty, which even a Greek sculptor could scarcely have found fault with, although more severe in some respects than the Hellenic ideal. The Arab's estimate is based on a consummate knowledge of comparative artistic anatomy — the rare knowledge of an accomplished stockraiser applied to human anatomy, physiology and osteology. So minute, indeed, are the descriptions of female beauty in the old Arabian poets that they can seldom be faithfully translated; the general idea can alone be given. There were recognized laws of beauty for every finger of the hand, every separate toe of the foot. Every dimple had a special name. That of the chin was called "nounah"; that at the corner of the lips, "rababah;" the little hollow of the upper lip, immediately beneath the nasal cartilage, "djirthimah"; the

hollow of the throat, between the collarbones, "thograh;" the dimple of the thumb-joint, near the wrist, "koult."

Furthermore, there was not merely one recognized type of beauty; there were several types. A woman was called "melihah," beautiful, only if so charming that every time looked at she seemed more graceful than before. A woman was called "djemilah" if merely pretty — if seeming to be exquisitely lovely at a distance, but only graceful near by. The curve of beauty — the magical line whose secret is popularly supposed to have been known only to the Greeks — was also known to the Arabs, though they did not perhaps ever succeed in expressing it in ivory or marble; and could only find poetical comparisons for it in the undulation of waves or the rounded outlines of the sand billows. Lips slightly pouting apart, so as to show a pearly gleam within, were also considered a beautiful possession. "Why are thy lips so sweetly open?" asks a desert poet of his beloved. "Eh!" she replied, "when the fig ripeneth to give its honey it openeth; the rose openeth also when the dew cometh to kiss it." Complexion was also a subject of æsthetic study — especially in regard to smoothness and clearness of skin, being compared to ivory rarely, often to the shell of the ostrich-eggs — a simile used by Mahomet in his description of the girls of Paradise. Flexibility of the joints was considered essential to womanly perfection; and Nabiga describes a "delicate hand,

whose fingers are like the stalks of the anam that may be tied into a knot, so flexible they are." A perfectly straight nose was not thought especially beautiful; the Arabs believed aquiline features to indicate a finer human thoroughbredness and force of character. Often the curve of a woman's nose is compared to "the curve of a fine sabre well-furbished. Rounded cheeks were held in abhorrence; the nomad considered fleshiness a sign of inferior blood; and "smooth flat cheeks, like polished silver," are highly praised. "She hath no stoutness; sleek she is, and full-hipped" is said of a fine woman by an Arab admirer, who expressed the view of his people that solid flesh, not adipose tissue, should give the line of beauty. "Flesh firm as the fruit of a ripening pomegranate." The hair of a woman was indeed one of her chief glories; but a certain thickness, heaviness, and glossiness was demanded, and a poet did not think it ungallant to compare such tresses to the black splendor of his stallion's mane or sweeping tail.

Operating upon a race thus imbued with æsthetic ideas and learned in the minutest details of physical completeness, the law of natural selection could not fail to produce remarkable results. Tribes were proud of special characteristics of beauty, transmitted from generation to generation. Thus the Kodaides were famed for the beauty of foot and leg; the Kindides, for the slender elegance of their

flexible waists; the Khozaides, for the graceful delicacy of both upper and lower limbs; the Ozrides, or Beni-Azra, for the eyes of their women not less than their famed liability to die of love. When the poet El-Asmai was asked by Haroun El Rashid to describe in verse the beauty of a slave, he was obliged to cite from the desert Arabs:

> "She hath the members of a Kinanide,
> The rounded loveliness of a Saidide,
> The beautiful eyes of a Hilalide,
> The graceful mouth of a Tayide."

Islam, indeed, quenched the creative genius of Arabian poetry; but the pagan songs were sung even to the days of the last Caliph, and when some Commander of the Faithful paid his court poet a thousand pieces of gold for describing a slave, the poet seldom relied upon his own powers of improvization, but simply quoted the words of the ancient nomads — the tamers of horses and breeders of fine camels — which had been bequeathed by memory from generation to generation. When Abdel-Melik, fifth Caliph of the house of Ommaya, wanted to know how to choose a woman for her beauty, it was not to a court poet or learned littérateur that he found it necessary to address his questions, but to a herder of camels — a desert Arab — a man of the Beni-Ratafan. The nomad's answer is remarkable; his description is absolutely sculpturesque, with a sculpturesqueness that suggests the bland smoothness, the fluent grace of a fine bronze. Its artistic

perfection apologizes for its nudity, and yet we prefer to quote it in the French of the Orientalist who first gave it European publicity:

> Prends la femme aux pieds bien unis, aux talons légers et delicats, aux jambes fines et lisses, aux genoux dégagés et dessinés, aux cuisses pleines et arrondies, aux bras potelés, aux mains déliées et fines, à la gorge relevée et ferme, aux joues rosées, aux yeux noirs et vifs, au front beau et ouvert, au nez aquilin et fier, à la bouche et aux dents fraîches et douces, à la chevelure d'un noir foncé, au cou souple et moëlleux, au ventre effacé et gracieusement ondulé.

"But where," asked the Caliph in astonishment, "can such a woman be found?"

The other replied: "Thou mayst find such a one among the Arabs of unmixed blood and the Persians of pure race."

Neither must it be forgotten that for those desert beauties "Kohl was the best of adornments and water the most excellent of perfumes."

But it was in the time of the Abbasside Caliphs that the Arabian sensitiveness to beauty obtained its supremest gratifications and that the luxury of loveliness reached such an extreme as the Greek world never knew. The demand for beautiful slaves brought to light human marvels who would certainly have been well worthy to serve as models to Praxiteles or Lysippus — creatures so beautiful that there seems to be good reason to believe the histori-

ans who declare that many who saw them died of love. Islam had a surplus of slaves, yet the pearls of its harems were paid for with the price of a province. The age when a Caliph could expend upon his marriage festivities the enormous sum of fifty million dinars — about one hundred and forty million dollars — was naturally the era of splendid slavery and of the insolence of beauty. Abou ibn Atik, one of the handsomest men of his era, and possessed of a most beautiful wife whom he dearly loved, says (writing in the far earlier days of Abd-el-Melik) that he saw slaves so beautiful that on seeing them he felt "as one in hell who should behold hopelessly the delights of Paradise." But those girls were certainly not to be compared with the beauties of the court of Haroun or El Mamoun, for whom the whole Eastern world had been searched. The proudest of Greek sculptors would scarcely have ventured to chisel upon the pedestal of his masterpiece: "THIS IS THE SUPREME BEAUTY." But the possessors of splendid girls did not hesitate to place upon their human statues inscriptions to the effect: "THIS IS THE MASTERPIECE OF GOD." Nothing can give a better idea of the extravagant luxury of the age than the translation of inscriptions graven upon fillets worn by these girls, or upon their girdles, or upon their fans.

"Behind Haroun El Rashid," says the poet, Abou'l Hassam, "I saw girl slaves standing so beautiful that they seemed like magnificent statues."

Fillets inlaid with rubies and with pearls clasped their smooth brows; and to these were attached thin plates of gold bearing Arab verses inscribed. One of these bore the words:

"Cruel one, thou hast disdained my love! — oh, God will judge between us!"

On another:

"What doth it avail me to cast at thee the shafts of my gaze — they do not reach thee. Thou hast shot thine at me, and they have smitten me — cruel that thou art."

A third bore the inscription:

"To submit one's cheek to the touch of love is to make oneself greater."

But these three pale into commonplaceness before the magnificent insolence of the fourth:

"I am a deserter from the houris of Paradise; I have been created to make trouble in the hearts of those who gaze upon me."

Worthy to compare with the above is the following which El-Asmai saw graven upon the fillets of beautiful slaves in Haroun's palace:

"We are young and bewitching beauties from the fields of Paradise.
God hath lavished his gifts upon us; in us there is naught to reproach.
For the love of God, sweet damozel, let me not languish for love!"

And this on the girdle of a beauteous slave:

"A single wink of thine eye, a teasing touch of thy hand, will be enough to unclasp it.

For my heart is so feeble that it could almost leap from my breast.
The sight of only a part of my beauty suffices to disturb thy soul."

We quote a few more at random — graven on the fillets of El Rashid's slaves:

"Say, O men! in heaven's name is it a sun that shines beneath that fillet, or is it the fair crescent of the nights?
Is life possible without the follies of love? Nay, then! flee the sight of beautiful eyes."

Rich men of Bagdad followed the example. One El Natify had a slave on whose fillet was written:

"Seduction and the power that teaseth hearts flash from mine eye when it gazeth. Turn, unhappy man, turn away thine eye from mine eye!"

On the fillet of Ward (Rose), slave of Mahany, was written:

"She is finished, all finished the beauty of her features; — nothing beyond her beauty is possible in this world.
For other mortals there is but one crescent in every month; but for me the crescent of beauty riseth daily upon the brow of Ward."

And there is a delicious coquetry in this inscription, traced with henna upon the hand of a slave-girl:

"It is not the beauty of henna that doth embellish my hand; 't is the beauty of my hand that doth heighten the beauty of the henna."

Girl-pages, attired like men, sometimes like soldiers, were also fashionable. One of these is

spoken of as having worn a helmet on which was engraved:

"Admire the beauty of this slave; never can thine eye learn to define it. Is she male or female; yes. 't is a woman! aye, 't is a man!"

And on her sword-belt was graven:

"The sword of her eyes doth not suffice her — that terrible sword that striketh down the keenest sabres. How dare I remain between those two swords! Let thee behold but once this proud beauty marching in warrior-garb, with her two-fold apparatus of slaughter; and thou wilt learn that the scimitar of her glance is even more terrible than the scimitar that is wielded with both hands."

The rage for beautiful slaves and exquisite dresses and inscribed girdles increased greatly under Haroun's reign; and the art of the poet was more than ever in demand. Even the tapestries, the coverings of furniture, were adorned with appropriate inscriptions, of which the following on a divan is a fair sample:

"More ravishing, more delicious than wine and the perfume of roses, is the group of two lovers, with cheek pressed against cheek. . . .
The one speaking of the troubles that he feels; the other telling of the love within her heart."

Or this, upon a fan:

"I bring a tender breath of air; with me rosy shame doth play:
I serve as a veil to the amorous mouth that pouts for a kiss."

And some of the kisses of those days, too, have become historical; we read of a single kiss being paid for with two pearls worth forty thousand drachmas.

The giver was no caliph, but a private citizen who sold his property to buy the pearls, and gave them away on the easy condition that the girl should take them from his lips with hers.

The tendency of such splendid voluptuousness, extravagance, and luxury has been the same in all civilized countries; the results similarly lamentable: national enervation, indolence, loss of patriotism and warrior-daring, loss of moral principle, death of ethical sentiment. Pleasure ruined the Caliphate as it ruined Rome. Abou Nouwas, Haroun's court poet, wrote two poems, of which two fragments reveal the whole history of the moral decadence of Islam. The first fragment is not without beauty:

"Ruby the wine and pearl the cup in the hands of the beautiful slave with waist so slender and voluptuous.
Ravishing the beauty who giveth thee to drink at once of her gaze and of her hand! Thus art thou ever seized with two intoxications."

But the second fragment gives us the dismal sequel:

"Multiply thy sins to the utmost; for thou art to meet an indulgent God.
When thou comest before Him thou wilt gnaw thy hands with regret for those pleasures thou didst avoid through fear of hell."

RABYAH'S LAST RIDE

A TRADITION OF PRE-ISLAMIC ARABIA.

THIS is the relation of the death of Rabyah, son of Mocokaddem, of the Beni-Firaz, according to the legend transmitted from generation unto generation by the rawis, or reciters of poems and of great deeds.

And it is written down in the commentary which Abou Zakariyah Yahyah-al-Tibrizi made upon those mighty poems chanted before Islam which are called "Hamasah" — a word signifying all that is stalwart and noble in a man — and in the Hamasah the place of the legend of Rabyah is in the second book, which is the "Book of Dirges." But the tale hath also been told by Al-Maidani, and by Abou Riyash; and it is likewise preserved in the great "Kitabal-Aghani," or "Book of Songs," collected and written down by Abou 'l Faraj Al' Ispahani, who devoted fifty years alone to the study of the poems and the legends of the Desert Arabs of old.

RABYAH, son of Mokaddem, of the Beni-Firaz, was famed as the bravest and the strongest and the most generous of his tribe what time he lived, and he was celebrated as an escort. For from the day that he had, single-handed, as a very young man, successfully defended his bride, Raytah, against the horsemen of the Beni-Djoucham on a foray, the women deemed it no little honor to have Rabyah as their escort. And no woman ever entrusted herself to the protection of Rabyah for a journey to whom any mishap befell while he remained with her.

Now on the day of his death Rabyah was escorting a caravan of women through the country of the Beni-Sulaim, and he was the only horseman with them. For though there had been blood between the Beni-Firaz and the Beni-Sulaim, the price of blood had been paid, and it was thought peace had been brought about. And the mother and sister of Rabyah were with the caravan.

And all that land was yellow and dry as long-dead bone; and it was strewn with great stones that seemed to have been rained down from heaven with fire, so seared and so blackened they were. And the pass leading to their own country — the Pass of Ghazal — was still far off when Rabyah, looking back, saw a distant rising of dust, like the smoke of a fire newly kindled. Now Rabyah rode upon his favorite gray mare, Ghezala, whom no desert steed might ever overtake, but he rode slowly for the sake of the women, who were mounted upon camels.

So he drew rein, and gazed at the dust-cloud, and perceived a gleam break through it, and another, and another, and many glimmerings — a lightning of glances. And looking a little while longer, he could discern a company of men in helms of iron and shirts of mail, riding upon lean black horses; and as they sped swiftly he knew the helm of the horseman that led them — Nubaishah, of whom it was said that Death, the Mother of Vultures, ever rode with him.

Then Rabyah spurred in haste after the women,

and urged on faster the toiling camels, and said unto his mother: "There is treachery, O mother! Lo! Nubaishah, the son of Habib, pursueth us with the wild men of Sulaim." And even as he spoke, the far-off drum-roll of galloping hoofs brake heavily upon their ears through the hot and thirsty air.

And turning his mare round, Rabyah added: "Haste ye toward the Pass, while I strive to hold them back; and I shall meet ye all at the Pass, to hold it so that ye can reach our tents and arouse the horsemen."

And he rode to meet the wild men of Sulaim, while the women urged their beasts faster over the dusty path.

Then Rabyah's sister, Oumm 'Amr, cried out in fear, and those with her lamented, as they saw Rabyah ride back all alone. But his mother, Oumm Saiyar, chided them, saying:

"While there remaineth so much as one drop of blood in his veins, no son of mine will ever fail to do the deeds of a man and the duty of a man. Have no fear, ye foolish ones! When did Rabyah ever fail to protect a woman? How many such robbers as those hath he not harassed ere this, even as lizards in their desert holes are harassed with a stick? How many an enemy's corpse hath he not left to be devoured by the lions of the woods, by the ancient eagles of the hills? In how many encounters hath he not been hard pressed before — aye, even

tightly pressed as the sandal strap between the toes of the wearer? Know ye not that my son is unto men as a beacon-light — aye, as the signal-fires that be lighted upon mountain-tops?"

Yet Rabyah's sister only would not be comforted, and she wept and said: "Surely my brother hath never before been placed in any peril like unto this peril, for the men of Sulaim are many, and it hath ever been said of Nubaishah that Death, the Mother of Vultures, rides with him."

But Oumm Saiyar answered her sharply: "He that feareth death, verily death shall find him, though he have a ladder long enough to climb to heaven upon. Better is death than shame! Fear rather for thine own honor, girl — urge on thy beast while Rabyah holds them back!"

Then Rabyah, alone, strove against all the swarm of Sulaim.

Now in Arabia there was no archer more skillful than Rabyah, and he bent his bow against the pursuers; and with his first shaft he pierced the throat of a son of Sulaim, so that the horseman died upon his horse, and with his second he nailed the thigh of another to the ribs of his animal, and with a third he shattered the sword-arm of the strongest Sulaimite; and seeing that it was Rabyah, the men of Sulaim fled from his archery; and he drove them back yet farther, sending his arrows humming like Djinns behind them. And when he had thus kept

them back a good while, he turned and rode after the women again.

Then the men of Sulaim rode furiously in pursuit of him, and shot arrows after him in vain. For though all the black horses strove until they were sweating like well-filled water-skins in the great heat, only Nubaishah's stallion could follow after Rabyah's gray mare; and the gray mare's skin remained dry.

And so soon as Rabyah — after having urged on the toiling camels of the women still faster — turned once more and laid an arrow across his bow, the drum-beat of pursuing hoofs broke up into a sound of scraping and of stumbling, while the men of Sulaim scattered and drew back in dismay. And many times Rabyah thus checked them. Only Nubaishah, the son of Habib, ever sat firm upon his black stallion and faced the humming shaft, and dexterously avoided it or turned it from him with marvelous surety of eye and trueness of hand.

So, fleeing and turning, halting and proceeding, pursuers and pursued ever drew nearer to the jagged teeth of the western hills; and in the black-toothed line of them appeared the bright gap of the Pass of Ghazal, ever widening and brightening as they rode. And now the great stones upon the way made long black shadows over the plain; for the sun was setting before them. So they rode into the edge of the shadow of the hills, and Rabyah turned to make a last stand, and the pounding of the pursuing hoofs

became a shuffling once again as the band of Sulaim drew rein in a cloud of dust. But now in Rabyah's quiver there were no more shafts.

Then Oumm Saiyar cried out to him from afar off: "Sword and spear, son! Sword and spear for the women of the Beni-Firaz! Give them sword and spear for thy mother's sake, for thine own Raytah, who waiteth in the tent."

And again and again did Rabyah charge them with spear and sword, scattering them even as a hawk scattereth quails. Only Nubaishah, the son of Habib, fled not, but yielded way cunningly to let him pass, and always thereafter circled menacing about him, like a vulture sweeping close to the sand.

And it happened at last that as Rabyah bore down upon a man of Sulaim, Nubaishah suddenly circled by him rapidly as a whirling wind, and thrust with his lance as he whirled, and the lance-blade burst its way through Rabyah's shirt of Persian mail and into his entrails.

And Nubaishah laughed, and drew back the blade of his wet spear between his stallion's ears, and smelled the odor of the blood upon it, and shouted, "Thou hast thy death-wound, O Rabyah!" For never had swarthy Nubaishah lifted his spear against a man to slay him and failed in his purpose — so keen his eye, so subtle his hand.

But Rabyah, seeking to deceive him for the women's sake, shouted back with all the deep power of his voice, "Thou liest in thy throat, Nubaishah!"

And Nubaishah laughed again, and shook his head in scorn, and circled away among his men.

Then Rabyah rode after the women swiftly, sitting firm as a tower despite his pain; and even at the Pass of Ghazal he came up with his mother, as he had promised, and he said to her, "O mother, give me to drink! I have received my death-wound."

And Oumm Saiyar looked upon the wound — a ghastly wound, that gaped even as the mouth of a camel with divided lip.

But she was of the race of eagles, and she answered him, tearlessly, "Nay, my son, for if I give thee to drink now thou diest, and we would then be taken and put to shame, and while even one drop of blood lives in thy veins, O son of mine, thy duty remains to stand in defense of the weakness of woman and the honor of thy people. Turn back, son of Mokaddem! Turn and smite them while thy strength lasts, and bear the thirst for thy mother's sake; yet suffer me first to bind up thy wound."

And while she strove to bind it with her veil — for that was all she had to bind it with — Rabyah murmured to her, "O mother, the sons of Firaz have indeed lost him they were wont to call their battle-hawk — their deep-diving hawk of battle — him they held precious unto them as fire-shining gold. They have lost their darling horseman, O mother!"

But Oumm Saiyar said to him, as she knotted tightly the long veil about his wound: "Son, are we

not of mighty Thalabah's stock, and Malik's breed, whose daily lot is bereavement? Well hath it been said that among us no man dieth in his tent! What is the record of our race but an outpouring of ghosts from the clash of battle, even as the spark-flood's perpetual gush from the grinding of swords? Yet thou knowest that blood of ours is never shed without vengeance; and when one of us falleth, straightway another riseth up to do the deeds of a man — to help the weak, to strive with them that are mighty for evil. Bear thou the thirst for thy people's sake; turn now, O son, and smite them stoutly while thy strength endures."

And Rabyah turned back again, while the women fled; and once more he scattered the band of Sulaim, and drove them before him, and held all the Pass. And he sat guarding the narrow way, upon his gray mare.

Then fell and died the day, in awful passion of fire, behind the Pass, and against the mighty glow, as in a flame, the horseman towered like a Djinn.

And the sons of Sulaim drew afar off, and watched Rabyah — as vultures wait and watch, pluming themselves, about the place where a lion lieth down to die. And because they would not again attack Rabyah, Nubaishah mocked them with rhymes piercing as the iron of lances. But they could not be moved to approach him; and Nubaishah foamed at the mouth like a camel that hath eaten bitter herbs. . . . And the night came.

But Rabyah, remaining in the shadow of the Pass, felt that his ghost was about to depart from him. And bending to the ear of his slim gray mare, he whispered unto her, softly, "Stand thou still, darling; stand still as a stone for the love of me!" Then he pressed the foot of his long spear into the ground, even as he sat upon her, and leaned upon it.

And in the darkness his ghost went out from him.

But ever, as a king sitteth upon his throne, so Rabyah sat upon his mare; and ever the gray mare stood still as a stone for the love of him.

Over the black desert of the sky slowly moved the long white caravan of the stars; and the night waned. But dead Rabyah still sat upon his mare; and the beautiful mare stood as a graven image standeth, for the love of him.

Until the cheek of the morning reddened, as for shame; and Nubaishah saw that Rabyah's head drooped, as though he slept upon his mare.

Then Nubaishah called unto him an archer of Khuzaah, a mighty man to bend the bow; and he asked the archer, "Hast thou an arrow left, my son?"

And the man looked to where Rabyah was, and replied, fearfully, "One only — and it is for my life."

But Nubaishah said: "Thy life is safe now. Shoot the arrow, my son; shoot at the gray mare."

And the mare saw the arrow coming, and leaped aside; and Rabyah fell upon his face. Then, for the

first time, all the men of Sulaim knew that he was dead; and they sent up a great shout.

And they went up to where he lay, and looked upon him, and wondered, and they spoiled him of his helm and his broken shirt of mail, and his lance and sword, and his sandals. But the mare had fled toward the tents of the Beni-Firaz, and none might overtake her.

And swart Nubaishah muttered: "There was no other like him among the men of Firaz. I almost repent me to have slain him."

And a wild man of Sulaim, marveling, smote the foot of his spear into the dead man's eye, and cried aloud, in the uncouthness of his admiration, "God curse thee! — a man who defendeth his women even after he is dead!"

But Oumm Saiyar and the women had reached the tents of the Beni-Firaz, and aroused the tribe. And the best men of the camp sprung to horse in haste, and rode fiercely to the Pass of Ghazal; but they only found Rabyah lying there, naked and dead, and the vultures circling above him. And leaving him there, they pursued so furiously after the sons of Sulaim that the long way smoked beneath them; yet they could not overtake them.

So they rode back to where Rabyah lay, and they buried him there, with great mourning, in the place of his last and greatest deed. And they built above him a hill of black stones to mark the spot, and in

the midst thereof, at the summit, they set up a great white stone, shaped like the back of a camel.

And never thereafter — until the days of the Prophet — did any Arab of any tribe pass that way who did not sacrifice a camel in honor of the valiant one who had defended his women even after he was dead. (Except, indeed, Hafs, son of Al-Ahnaf, who, having but one camel, could not make the sacrifice; but he composed an immortal poem in honor of Rabyah, and his verses are still in the mouths of the Arabian people.)

And never a son of Firaz passed that way to war who did not cry out unto Rabyah: "La tab'adan! Abide with us! Be with us this day, O Rabyah!"

And after Islam, not less than in the Days of Ignorance, the wives of the desert horsemen prayed they might become mothers of brave tall boys worthy to bear Rabyah's name.

And whenever, in time of foray, or in days of ill fortune of war, or amid the ghastly perils of desert travel, women found themselves face to face with the fear of shame, they would cry out the name of him upon whom no woman had ever called vainly in those wild, dark days before Islam.

And Islam itself, spreading like a holy fire east and west, two hundred days' journey from India to the Sea of Darkness, bore abroad his name, and flashed it far into the black South, making it known unto the blue-eyed Touareg, whose camels dance to the sound of music — making it known even to

CREOLE SKETCHES

EDITED BY

CHARLES WOODWARD HUTSON

STANFORD LIBRARY

New Orleans friends used to speak it well." George W. Cable, the novelist, whose works he reviewed in the *Item* with enthusiastic praise, says that Hearn was a frequent visitor at his house, and that they profited by mutual frank criticism of each other's writings. Dr. Rudolph Matas, the renowned surgeon, tells of intimate companionship with him during his stay in this city. Dr. Lucien Salomon, a physician of long-established reputation, states that he was introduced to him by Dr. Matas, and that, despite his eccentricities, he found him a "lovable fellow." We know that Hearn's lifelong friendship with Miss Elizabeth Bisland, now Mrs. C. W. Wetmore, began when they were workers together in the office of the *Times-Democrat*. During these later years, too, he was befriended by the Bakers, both Page and Marion, and the wife of the latter, known to literature as Julia K. Wetherell. He had friends, too, who were not so intellectual, but for whom his affection was great. One of these was Mrs. Courtney, his landlady through the later years of his sojourn in this city, to whom he wrote from time to time, during temporary absences, letters that prove how much he valued her kindness, and with whom he left that notebook which enables us largely to supplement his bibliography, hitherto confined to the lists set down in Dr. Gould's book.

It is true that many of these friendships date from a period subsequent to his connection with the *Item*. But during those earlier years he resided

wholly in the Creole quarter of the city, and there he had large opportunities for studying Creole character and Creole customs. At this time Colonel John W. Fairfax, then owner of the *Item*, was, with the exception of George W. Cable, perhaps his only friend in the city. But he evidently soon made other friends, and those chiefly among persons more familiar with the Creole, than with the American, side of the city.

There are many marks by which his unsigned articles can be identified, among which not the least striking are certain peculiarities in punctuation. But the most noteworthy of all is the higher note, sometimes philosophic, sometimes romantic, to which he soars in every paper, whatever the subject. With him the touch artistic is always there: Journalism becomes Literature.

It should be noted, as a curious addendum to "La Douane," that the niches of the New Orleans Custom House are still empty of the figures that were destined in the original design to fill them. Can it be that they are still hidden away in some locked, and perhaps forgotten, room of that vast building?

"Eleusis" is an exquisite trifle, an accurate and detailed description of the toilet and dress of the ballet dancer, a fit companion-piece to "Les Coulisses" as an evidence of his intimacy with the inner secrets of the stage during his service as dramatic critic; — French in its lightness of touch, and dainty as the apparel of which it treats.

In "Some Positive Opinions" we have another and very different token of his experience when accorded the freedom of the greenroom.

The review of "The Grandissimes" — it is only one of several — and those of "Madame Delphine" and of Dr. Mercier's Louisiana novel, "L'Habitation St. Ybars," are included as holding a close relationship with the sketches that are professedly Creole.

"Under the Scourge" is a picture of the dreadful yellow-fever days, as "The City of Dreams" depicts the result of that fateful year upon the smitten souls of the people. Fortunately science has forever rendered impossible the return of that heavy weight of woe that hung over the city in the year of which these are memorials.

CHARLES WOODWARD HUTSON

CREOLE SKETCHES

* * *

THE GLAMOUR OF NEW ORLEANS [1]

THE season has come at last when strangers may visit us without fear, and experience with unalloyed pleasure the first delicious impression of the most beautiful and picturesque old city in North America. For in this season is the glamour of New Orleans strongest upon those whom she attracts to her from less hospitable climates, and fascinates by her nights of magical moonlight, and her days of dreamy languors and perfumes. There are few who can visit her for the first time without delight; and few who can ever leave her without regret; and none who can forget her strange charm when they have once felt its influence. To a native of the bleaker Northern clime — if he have any poetical sense of the beautiful in nature, any love of bright verdure and luxuriance of landscape — the approach to the city by river must be in itself something indescribably pleasant. The white steamer gliding through an unfamiliar world of blue and green — blue above and blue below, with a long strip of low green land alone to break the ethereal azure; the waving cane; the ever-

[1] *Item*, November 26, 1878.

green fringe of groves weird with moss; the tepid breezes and golden sunlight — all deepening in their charm as the city is neared, make the voyage seem beautiful as though one were sailing to some far-off glimmering Eden, into the garden of Paradise itself. And then, the first impression of the old Creole city slumbering under the glorious sun; of its quaint houses; its shaded streets; its suggestions of a hundred years ago; its contrasts of agreeable color; its streets reëchoing the tongues of many nations; its general look of somnolent contentment; its verdant antiquity; its venerable memorials and monuments; its eccentricities of architecture; its tropical gardens; its picturesque surprises; its warm atmosphere, drowsy perhaps with the perfume of orange flowers, and thrilled with the fantastic music of mocking-birds — cannot ever be wholly forgotten. For a hundred years and more has New Orleans been drawing hither wandering souls from all the ends of the earth. The natives of India and of Japan have walked upon her pavements; Chinese and swarthy natives of Manila; children of the Antilles and of South America; subjects of the Sultan and sailors of the Ionian Sea have sought homes here. All civilized nations have sent wandering children hither. All cities of the North, East, and West have yielded up some restless souls to the far-off Southern city, whose spell is so mystic, so sweet, so universal. And to these wondering and wandering ones, this sleepy, beautiful, quaint old city murmurs: "Rest with me.

The Place d'Armes, New Orleans

On the left of the Cathedral is the old Cabildo and on the right the Casa Curial

I am old; but thou hast never met with a younger more beautiful than I. I dwell in eternal summer; I dream in perennial sunshine; I sleep in magical moonlight. My streets are flecked with strange sharp shadows; and sometimes also the Shadow of Death falleth upon them; but if thou wilt not fear, thou art safe. My charms are not the charms of much gold and great riches; but thou mayst feel with me such hope and content as thou hast never felt before. I offer thee eternal summer, and a sky divinely blue; sweet breezes and sweet perfumes, bright fruits, and flowers fairer than the rainbow. Rest with me. For if thou leavest me, thou must forever remember me with regret." And assuredly those who wander from her may never cease to behold her in their dreams — quaint, beautiful, and sunny as of old — and to feel at long intervals the return of the first charm — the first delicious fascination of the fairest city of the South.

LA DOUANE[1]

THAT vast gray building on Canal Street, which seemeth ancient as Karnac, and upon which princely sums have vainly been expended in the foolish hope of completing it, has long troubled us with a strange impression difficult to analyze. A sense of weight and antiquity oppresses the beholder when he gazes upon it. Kinglake's nightmare of "solid immensity" may be realized by a careful study of it; and its loftiest portion affords an artistic effect of ruin — not the picturesque ruin of feudal remains, but ruin as of Egypt, vast and shadowy and dusty. It has been to the United States Treasury what the sieve was to the daughters of Danaüs. Rivers of gold have been poured into it; yet it remaineth as before. Its marble hall seems like the Pharaonic burial-chamber in the heart of the granite monument of Cheops; and its doors exhale in the most arid and burning weather a breath of damp chilliness, such as smites a mourner in the face when he opens the iron gates of a family vault. So weirdly does it seem to hint of Death and the Past that one cannot help wondering why its corridors are not hypogea and its offices filled with mummies. Without, in sooth, its very shape is ominous. It is, despite its windows and entrances, its pilasters and niches, a huge sarcophagus

[1] *Item*, December 2, 1878.

of granite. Its form is funereal; and against the dismal immensity of its exterior, the openings in its awful walls seem but as carvings upon some ancient stone coffin.

It is in very truth a sarcophagus, wherein repose the mummified remains of that which was once mighty, but not magnanimous; of that which was once rich, yet not honest; of that which once believed itself eternal and invulnerable, yet which expired like Herod of self-engendered corruption. Its corridors are indeed hypogea, filled with the mummies of Radical Pharaohs; and its marble hall a burial-chamber, empty, indeed, like that in the stony heart of the Great Pyramid, yet haunted by the ghost of that régime for which none are left to mourn.

But those empty niches in the great waste surfaces of the quadruple façade! Ah, those niches! — those niches! Why are they accursed with emptiness; why made hideous with vacuity? The statues of stone created to fill them were chiseled out a quarter of a century ago; and yet never have beheld the light of day. Their stone eyes have never gazed upon the glory of Canal Street; their marble ears have never hearkened to the gossip of politicians; their rigid forms have never left the enclosure of the wooden coffins into which they were first packed for importation. They sleep in the awful silence and darkness of the most dismal chamber in the whole gray building. They sleep, and the dust thickens upon their faces; and sometimes in the dead waste

and middle of the night they do converse dismally together. They represent Faiths not worshiped under the old régime, Hopes that had failed, and Charities that would have been scorned; Virtues that had fled, or had hidden themselves in lonesome places; Saintly Personages [1] who could not in those days have received respect; and Great Statesmen, perhaps, whose marble faces would have blushed into Egyptian granite, could they have seen that which was, but will never be again. And Radicalism, therefore, hid them away — not, indeed, out of consideration for their feelings, but out of consideration for its own. For it could not have endured the silent reproach of those eyes of marble, or dare to concoct plots within the reach of those ears of marble; and therefore the Faiths and the Virtues were cunningly hidden away where their presence could offend nobody. And now they ask, "When shall we be delivered from darkness and silence and oblivion? When shall the trumpet sound for our resurrection day? When shall we behold the great glory of the Southern sun and the splendor of Canal Street? Better even with broken noses to stand on our pedestals, better even to lose several of our Carrara limbs than this." But the silence and the darkness and the dampness remain; and echo answereth nothing.

[1] We might be mistaken, perhaps, in regard to the symbolic character of some of the Custom-House statues; for no living man of this generation hath a memory sufficiently strong to remember the day of their coming or the description which accompanied them.

THE CITY OF DREAMS [1]

LATTERLY it has been said that if New Orleans has any special mania which distinguishes it from other cities, it is the mania of "talking to one's self." It were useless to deny so widely recognized a fact as the propensity of people in New Orleans to perambulate their native streets conversing only with themselves. And strangers visiting us have said: "The people of New Orleans are inclined to madness; they converse continually with themselves, which is a sign of insanity." Is it that the people are being driven mad by stupid legislation and business losses and outrageous taxes? God only knows! But they do talk either to themselves or to viewless beings or to the sleepy shadows that fling jagged bits of darkness across the streets on sunny days.

They are comparatively many, these lovers of solitary musing; and usually seek the quiet of the most deserted streets — those streets to which the Secret Police of the East give the ominous name of *dead streets*. Perhaps one might say as well, *streets of the dead*.

At one time we took a special interest in watching those wandering and murmuring spirits. They are of various ages; but most generally advanced in years. The action of the younger men or women is

[1] *Item*, March 9, 1879.

usually quick and nervous; that of the older, slow and meditative. The former often speak angrily as if brooding over some wrong; the latter, rather in sorrow than in anger. All of which is quite natural and to be expected from those who talk to themselves.

What do they talk about?

That is a matter not always easy to find out. The hard echo of a brisk footstep on the pavement, even the sudden fluttering of a leafy shadow, seems often sufficient to break the reverie; the speaker looks about him like one awakened from a dream, gazes with a half-timid kind of suspicion at those who pass by, as if fearing to have been overheard; and walks off at a quicker gait. To study the character of these people perfectly, one must wear rubber shoes.

It would be cruel to wear india-rubber shoes for such a purpose; it would also be despicable. Therefore we cannot fully answer the question —

What are they talking about?

But occasionally the most innocent passer-by cannot fail to catch a word or two — sometimes strangely full of meaning, sometimes meaningless. We have heard such words. Occasionally vast sums of money were mentioned — billions, quintillions! — a sure sign that the speaker was financially stripped, and had little hope of favors from the goddess Fortuna. Sometimes we heard odd curses — men cursing themselves, and others, nameless

places and nameless people, unknown memories and unknown misfortunes. Sometimes they spoke cheerfully, and laughed to themselves softly; — but this was seldom, very, very seldom.

Before the epidemic we fancied that the majority of these conversations with airy nothings were upon the subject of money. Indeed, most of the fragmentary mutterings which reached us seemed related to dreams of wealth — wild, vague, and fantastic — such dreams as are dreamed by those who have lost all and hope for nothing, but who seek consolation in the splendor of dreams of the Impossible.

Then came the burning summer with its burning scourges of fever; — under the raw, merciless, dizzy sunlight, and the pitilessly clear infinite of warm blue above, the mutterers still wandered the silent streets, seeking out the bits of shadow, as Arabs oases in a world of yellow sand; — and they talked more than ever to themselves and to the shadows, to the vast void above and to the whispering trees that drooped in the mighty heat.

So the months rolled dryly and fiercely by; the sun rose each day with the same glory of angry heat; and the sky glowed each evening with the glare of molten brass. And the talkers became fewer; but they seemed to talk much more than they ever had before done. They talked to the black streamers that fluttered weirdly at the handles of muffled bells, and to ghostly white things hung to cottage doors,

and to the long processions that rumbled ominously toward the Places of Tombs.

Sometimes it seemed that one heard a sound of sobbing — stifled sobbing; as if a man were swallowing a bitter grief with bitter determination — but this was perhaps imaginary; for there were so many strange sounds in that strange summer that no one could well trust his ears.

The summer waned; and yet it seemed at last as though the number of those who talked to invisible things became greater. They *did* become greater in number. There was no doubt of it remaining before the first cold wind came from the far North, boisterous and wild as though suddenly freed from some Arctic enchanter. And the numbers of the mysterious ones waxed greater.

Then at intervals their words fell upon our ears; and it seemed that the character of them had undergone a change — no longer expressing ideas of wealth. They had ceased to speak in our hearing of money. They spoke of the dead — and muttered remembered words uttered by other tongues — and asked information from waving shadows and white walls regarding people that God only knows anything about.

Perhaps they remembered that the only witnesses of some last interview were the same white walls and waving shadows. And the shadows lay there at just the same angle — well, perhaps, the angle was a little sharper — and they were waving just

as dreamily as then. And perhaps a time might come in which all Shadows that have been must answer all questions put to them.

Seeing and hearing these things, we somehow ceased to marvel that some people dwelling in the city of New Orleans should speak mysteriously and hold audible converse with their own thoughts; forasmuch as we, also, dreaming among the shadows, spoke aloud to our own hearts, until awakened by an echo of unanswered words.

A CREOLE TYPE [1]

It is a little curious how the old Creole element preserves its ancient customs and manners in the very heart of the changes that are going on about it. At half-past nine or ten o'clock the American city is all alive — a blaze of gas and a whirl of pleasure. The old French town is asleep; the streets are deserted; and the shadow of a pedestrian makes a moving black speck against the moonlight on the pavement only at long intervals. Creoledom wakes up as slowly and cautiously as possible; and has not fairly begun to enter upon the business of the day until the sun has warmed the streets. The comparatively new generation of American citizens, when brought into contact with this older population, is utterly unable to understand the difference of character; and shuns as much as possible the transaction of business with it — which contents the Creoles perfectly well. They seem to tolerate those who understand them, and to abominate those who do not, and propose to live in the good old way as long as possible — marrying and giving in marriage, aiding one another in a good brotherly way, and keeping themselves to themselves. If there is one virtue they possess remarkably, it is the virtue of minding their own affairs — which, alas! cannot

[1] *Item*, May 6, 1879.

always be said of all other people who dwell in New Orleans.

Nothing, perhaps, can be funnier than the contrast of character brought out by the attempt of a stiff-mannered stranger to do business with a typical Creole, especially if the latter be of the fair sex. Let us imagine, for example, the episode of renting a house to a foreigner — somebody whom chance or curiosity has prompted to seek quarters in the old-fashioned part of the city. The stranger is a little phlegmatic; the woman is as much the opposite as any human being could well be — a little dark, tropically dark, but quite attractive, with magnetic eyes, an electric tongue, and an utter indifference to those ordinary feelings which prompt landladies to play the agreeable; — proud as a queen, and quite as determined to show her own individuality as the stranger is to conceal his own. She has a nice little house; and the stranger would like to rent it. She would also like to rent it; but only according to her own original idea of conditions, and she would never think of concealing her inmost feelings on the subject. She is determined that nobody shall impose upon her, and that fact she proposes to explain very forcibly forthwith; the stranger appears to be a good sort of man, but appearances are so deceitful in this wicked world!

She — "Ah, yes, monsieur, I have a nice little house. Let me beg of you to wait a moment until I open the other door, so that you can enter my parlor."

He — "But what is the rent of the house?"

She (in a voice sweeter than the sweetest honey) — "One minute! — this way, monsieur — come in; be seated, if you please."

He — "But what is the rent of —"

She (shutting the door, and placing herself before it like a statue of animated bronze, and suddenly changing the sweet voice for a deep and extraordinarily vibrant alto) —"Ah, now, monsieur, let us at once understand one another. I have a nice little house. Good! You want a nice little house. Good! Let us understand one another. In the first place, I do not rent my house to everybody, monsieur. Oh, no, no, No!!" (*crescendo*).

He — "But what is the rent of —"

She (imperiously, terrifying him into silence with a flash of her black eyes) — "Do not interrupt me, monsieur. Three things I require from a tenant. Do you know what the first is? No? — then I will tell you. Cash, Cash, CASH! (*crescendo*) — right here in my hand — in advance — ah, yes, all the time in advance."

He (very timidly) — "Yes, certainly — I know — of course! — I expected; — but what is —"

She (in a voice like the deepest tone of a passionately agitated harp) — "Attends, donc, monsieur. The second thing which I require from a tenant is a guarantee that he will stay. Ah, yes! I am not one of those who rent houses for a week, or a month, or six months. Mon Dieu, non! I must have people

who STAY, STAY, STAY (*pianissimo*); and they must stay a long, long time. You must not come to me if you want a house only for —"

He (with a last and desperate effort, which happens to be partially successful) — "O madam, I want to stay for a number of years in the house, if I take it; but I cannot take it until I have seen it."

She — "You shall see it, monsieur, you shall see it (parenthetically). Now the third thing which I require from a tenant is absolute cleanliness, absolute, absolute! No spitting on the walls, no dirt upon the doors, no grease upon the planking, no cochonnerie in the yard. You understand me, monsieur? Yes! — you shall see the house: these are the keys."

He — "But what is the rent of —"

She (frightening him into motionlessness by a sudden gypsy-like gesture) — "Ah, monsieur, but I cannot trust you with these keys. No; my servant shall go with you. I cannot have all the doors of my house left open. No; I have had too much experience. My servant shall go with you. She shall bring me back my keys. Marie! come here! Go, monsieur, see the house!"

He (resignedly) — "Thanks, but may I ask what is —"

She (with a superb gesture of withering disgust and another of terrible determination) — "Do you not know, sir, that I would rather shut the house up until the last day of the world than rent it to the

canaille! Ah! the canaille! Monsieur! Ah! the canaille, the canaille!"

(These last words, with an inexpressible look of horror upon her face, which would make the stranger laugh if he were not afraid to laugh.)

He — "And the rent is —"

She (sweetly as a rose-fed nightingale)— "Twenty-five dollars to a responsible party, monsieur."

The stranger is by this time fairly mesmerized. He has listened to a sermon, heard an oration, received a reproof, watched a most marvelous piece of natural acting by a beautiful woman, and felt his own will and purpose completely crushed out of him by the superior vitality and will-power of this wonderful creature, whose gestures, graceful as a bayadère's, seemed to weave a spell of magnetism about him. He sees the house; pays faithfully in advance; gives proper recommendations; and never forgets the three requisites which his landlady taught him as forcibly as though she had burned the words into his brain with a red-hot iron.

A VISIT TO NEW ORLEANS [1]

THE Devil arrived at New Orleans early yesterday morning, having left his winter residence in Chicago at midnight. There was little need, he thought, to bother himself further about Chicago during the present summer, as he holds a mortgage upon that city, which has at present no prospect of being able to prevent him from foreclosing.

Sensitive to the beauties of Nature, — a trait for which he has ever been famous since that primeval morning when, hiding in the leafy shadows of Paradise, he beheld fair Eve admiring the reflection of her snowy limbs in the crystal waters of Gehon, — the Devil could not suppress a sigh of regret as he gazed with far-reaching eyes along the old-fashioned streets of the city, whose gables were bronzed by the first yellow glow of sunrise. "Ah!" he exclaimed, "is this, indeed, the great City of Pleasure, the Sybaris of America, the fair capital which once seemed to slumber in enchanted sunlight, and to exhale a perfume of luxury even as the palaces of the old Cæsars? Her streets are surely green with grass; her palaces are gray with mould; and her glory is departed from her. And perhaps her good old sins have also departed with her glory; for riches are a snare, and gold is a temptation." And the Devil

[1] *Item*, May 10, 1879.

frowned anxiously, and his deep eyes glowed under his brows even as smouldering charcoal glows in the shadows of night.

The Devil had not been in New Orleans since the period of Reconstruction — a period at which, our readers may remember, it was proverbially said that New Orleans was "going to the Devil." Such also appears to have been the Devil's own personal opinion. He found things in such a condition about that time that he had not been able to find room in his voluminous breast-pockets for all the mortgages which he had obtained upon men's souls; and believing, from the mad career of Radicalism, that the whole city must be made over to him in the course of a few years, he had departed elsewhere in search of employment. "They have no need of me," said the Devil, "in the State of Louisiana."

The history of the overthrow of Radicalism, however, which the Devil read in the *Chicago Times*, filled him with consternation. He had a gigantic job on his hands in Chicago, and could not just then afford to leave Illinois, for reasons which we have at the present writing no need to specify. But the rumor of a reform in politics in Louisiana, and a just government, pleased him not at all; and he felt exceedingly anxious to visit the Crescent City. It happened, however, that he could not get away until the midnight between the death of Thursday and the birth of Friday. And, moreover, the Devil has private reasons for objecting to travel on Friday.

The odor of the gutters displeased him as he walked down Saint Charles Street, and he stopped his nose with a handkerchief bearing a pattern border of green skeletons and red cupids intertwined upon a saffron ground. "Poverty and dirt are sometimes virtuous," said the Devil, as he proceeded on his way. At the next corner he bought all the papers of the previous day. He put the *Picayune* in his pistol-pocket; cursed the *New Orleans Bee* and the *City Item*, and, flinging them back upon the dealer's stand after a brief examination of their contents, he folded up the other papers in a bundle for future reference. "There is too much virtue in the press, I am afraid," said the Devil; "the *Picayune* is the only paper which suits me."

The police stations were next visited; and the Devil smiled a ghastly smile. "I have no fault to find with the police," he said; "and that reminds me that my own police force below is getting disorganized. I'll have to recruit in New Orleans."

An examination of the records in the Auditor's office tickled him, until he exploded in an abysmal laugh — a series of bass notes singularly like the famous laugh of Mephistopheles in *Faust*. "Why, this system is almost as good as Radicalism," he said. "Forty-five thousand dollars for running an Auditor's office!"

He next read the order of the Mayor to the colored churches, and nodded his head approvingly. "Good enough in its way," he said.

By twelve o'clock he had visited all the public institutions; — the Sanitary Association highly displeased him; but the Board of Health put him into an uproarious good humor. "I was a fool to come down here at all," he said; "this Board of Health can do my work better than I can do it myself, and the people seem to be just fools enough to let them do it. Instead of honest poverty, I find vicious poverty; instead of reform, demoralization; instead of law, I find lawyers; instead of justice, oppression. What Carnival King ever found a city so well prepared for him? I guess I shall leave at once; for I have no work to do as yet in Louisiana."

But before leaving, the Devil took a notion to alight upon the top of the State House to watch the Convention. He listened for several hours to the proceedings, much to his own surprise; and it was nearly three o'clock before he knew it.

"Half-past two o'clock on Friday," muttered the Devil; "and I have to be in Pandemonium by a quarter to three. I don't quite like the state of affairs in that old hotel; but I doubt if the situation really demands my presence; I think I shall send a subaltern up to the Convention; for the Devil's interests are not sufficiently represented. But I shall not come back here for twenty years. What is the use of staying in a city that is going just where I am going? Besides, if anything serious happens, my representative can inform me. They have an embargo on reform here, it seems to me — just as they

have on commerce. After all, New Orleans in 1879 is not very much holier than New Orleans in 1866. I guess I'll adjourn."

And he adjourned, after having copied the word "Choppinism" into his new *Dictionnaire Infernale.*

COMPLAINT OF CREOLE BOARDING-HOUSE-KEEPER [1]

O LA CANAILLE! la canaille! All time after dis I will make dem to pay in advance.

De first dat I have, say he vas a capitaine. I know not if he vas a capitaine; but he vas a misérable. After he have eat and sleep here six week and not pay me, I tell him, "Monsieur, I must money have."

He say: "Madame, you take me for tief?"

I say: "Monsieur, it is right dat you pay; I have wait long time assez."

He den say: "I learn you how to speak me in a manner so much insolent. *Now*, I not pay you till when I be ready, and I not hurry myself."

"Go out from my house!" I say.

"I go out, madame, from your dirty house when it me please" — dat how he speak me. And I could not force him to part till when I had take all de furniture out from his room. He owe me not more as seventy dollaire!

. . . After, I have one Frenchman, I tink him well elevated — le coco. He nail his valise on de floor for make me tink heavy; and he dispar one night — owing me forty-nine dollaire! I find noting in his valise only one *syringe*.

. . . After, I have two married. Dey pay me

[1] *Item*, September 27, 1879.

enough well, until when de woman run away wit some oder man. Her husban' stay till when he owe me eighty dollaire. After, he go too; and write me letter as dis:

"Madame, I cheat you of eighty dollaire; and I not wish only I could cheat you of eighty thousand dollaire. It was for cause of you dat my wife have run away."

After, I find out she not was his wife.

. . . Den I have a sick man. He fall on de banquette in face of my house, and I take him in to nurse. When dat he get well he tell me he vas one professor of langedge. He eat and sleep here four mont; and first he pay a little. He complain much from noise. He vas what you call nerveux — so like I was oblige for to make my daughter walk witout shoes in naked foots; and we to speak in dumb and deaf language by fear of make him trouble. He smoke in de bed and burn de cover; also he break de pot and de cradle-chair, and after, de window, an' de armoire an' de — vat you call de pendule; — he let fall ink on de carpet, and he spit tobacc' on de wall, and he vomit in de bed. But I noting say, as he not 'ave baggage; — ainsi, wen he owe me forty dollaire I not want turn him out for dat I get my money more late. When at de end I tell him to go out, he tell me he have receive a checque and pay me on Monday. But I nevaire see him after. He owe me one hundred and sixty-seven dollaire — and seventy cent vat I lend him for medicine to buy.

. . . After, I have one woman, species of camel (espèce de chameau) and one doctor, her husband (tout ce qu'il y avait d'abominable). She pretend to be — and you call dat? — sage femme; and he is not so much doctor as my cat; but for all dey doctor me for two hundred and fifty dollaire, and I not ever obtain of it not one sou.

. . . After, I have tree familee — all vat vas of rough and ugly; for one mont I not receive of rent. So I serve to dem notice of quit. But dey tell me dey not me pay nevaire, and not quit until when I make law-suit. Eh bien, de rent of de house vas not more as fifty dollaire, and de law cost me perhaps one affair of more like one hundred dollaire. Ainsi, I quit de house, an' leave dem all dere to do like dey would please. But before dat I could leave, dey steal me two buckets, and one stove, and one broom, and one clock, and one iron, and one coffee-mill, and one hen, and one leetle cat vat I much vas fond of, and one plate, and some linen of womans vat to me not belong.

THE BOARDER'S REPLY [1]

Est-ce que vous vous fichez de moi? 'cré nom! No: I not no more pay my rent in advance, because dat I have not of fait in permanence of businesses in Orleans.

Wen I am first come I take myself a room in de Rue Bourgoigne. Dey have in first floor one bear, one parrot, and two macacs and several of cats of Malta; and wen dat I enter myself to pay my rent, I see all dat to move itself about inside. De woman was of color — vat you call one mulatresse — and I pay in advance — like one animal!

After vat I have live in de house six week, I not to her owe noting, but she me owe one affaire of ten piastres more as my rent vat I ever pay in advance; — for dat she me come near every day for borrow one quarter of piastre or one half of dollaire, or two dollaire, and she smile and make so many funny bêtises dat I not could her noting refuse. After dat I be dere two mont, she owe me two mont of room in more as I have her pay in advance.

After a little of time I not see more de little beasts; — she have sell de macacs and de bear for herself obtain money. And I vas well content dat de parrots not dere vas more; — it vas true little demons vas not allow to nobody to repose himself.

[1] *Item*, September 28, 1879.

One night I not come home until twelve past, and I not hear noting of noise. After I enter into my room, and I find noting inside — no bed, no chaise, no armoire — noting only my linen-dirty and my blue trouser-old. All de house empty; all de rooms naked — personne in its inside. She not have not pay her rent — so, by consequence, dey seize demselves de furniture and have clean out de house — of such way as I find myself have to sleep on one floor much hard and all vat dere vas of dirty. And never again I not noting see of de woman of color vat owe to me near twenty of dollaire.

. . . But I stay in de house, for one oder woman of color enter in morning; and she have much of furnitures. I explique myself to her, and she tell me in Creole — "To s'ré resté 'vec moue, mo to donné belle chamb' garni asteur, pou' même prix." [1] And I myself dere install. She ask me dat I pay in advance; and I not like for refuse, like I not have time for look for more rooms. C'est égal, say to myself I.

Sometime she clean well my room; and sometime she not it clean not of all. Sometime she permit to strange mens of color dat dey enter my room; and dey permit demselves to lie upon my bed wen dat I was out in way to make a walk. I not was content; but could noting do, for dat I have pay in advance.

[1] Editor's Note: The Gumbo, or Creole, given above may best be rendered into the Gullah of our English-speaking coast thus:

"You be stay wid me, me gib yo' fine fuhnish' room now-now, fuh same price."

One day she desire to buy a miroir, and she ask me dat I pay, for dat she not have of money; and she tell me her husband me pay wen he have de Saturday next arrive. I so pay, like one kind of beast vat I be; and before dat come de Saturday, one sheriff take all vat vas in all de house; and I not vas able, never already, to obtain vat she me owe. Also I since inform myself for as she had noting of one husband.

. . . I be myself disgusted; and I take myself room in house of one white woman, de vat me ask dat I pay in advance. After, she not me well treat. She take from out my room one cradle-chair and much more of furniture, de vat she say vas not put inside but for ornamente. She have children vat tear my book, and one locataire steal my trouser, and one steal tobacco, and one steal my soap. Never I could myself keep a little of soap. I have dere one essuiemains for more as two week.

I pay first of mont after. Second of mont I come home, and I see a — vat you call vente à l'encan; and one woman come to have take away my book — one affair of fifty book. Never can I arrive to procure again de money to me, nor even to find where live de woman vat have take my book.

. . . One time of more I pay in advance. De lady was of France, and she had de face beautiful and de heart good. She not me treat but too much well. I have rest in her house forever; but I not rest long. I pay my rent ever de fifteen of mont. I pay de

fifteen of Avril. De sixteen, she die quick of vat you call mort subite. Never I see in it-not-matter-what-oder-country of tings pareille. Not again do I be so much beast for in advance to pay.

WHY CRABS ARE BOILED ALIVE [1]

AND for why you not have of crab? Because one must dem boil 'live? It is all vat is of most beast to tell so. How you make for dem kill so you not dem boil? You not can cut dem de head off, for dat dey have not of head. You not can break to dem de back, for dat dey not be only all back. You not can dem bleed until dey die, for dat dey not have blood. You not can stick to dem troo de brain, for dat dey be same like you — dey not have of brain.

[1] *Item*, October 5, 1879.

A CREOLE JOURNAL [1]

I READ to you of my journal-book — how he do:

Jan. 1 — Mon cher, lend to me one little affaire of ten dollaire, and I pay de 1st, wit good intress. Ah! you be good friend. I be possess of money; but for now I have of de expenses large.

Feb. 1 — Mon ami, I much sorry for dat I not can you pay to-day; but soon I you pay wit grand intress. One mus' not ever angry himself for ten dollaire.

March 1 — Mon bonhomme, I not can you pay, not wen as I have of money. You be too much of impatient. I much sorry for dat I ever ask of you money.

April 1 — Monsieur, I not have ever suppose dat you like more one miserable ten dollaire as my friendship. I not ever more ask of you one faveur. I not like you speak me so.

May 1 — For wat you lend me money like one Imbecile? I more like owe one tousand dollaire as ten — for dat I more be respected. I be tramped upon for dat I owe one dirty ten dollaire. You be pay some one day.

June 1 — You are one Insolent! If suppose for dat I do owe to you one miserable dollaire! Is it dat you are one beggar and have of hunger, for dat

[1] *Item*, October 5, 1879.

am I to be ask all time? You take me as one Imbecile? Not have I tell you I pay wen I can? I not will myself suffer more to be insult for one dirty dollaire.

July 1 — To-morrow I can you pay. I hope to ask dat you do me one little faveur — to ask dat friend to you dat he give me one place like collecteur or secretaire.

August 1 — I not pay until wen I can one place obtain.

September 1 — I not pay until wen sugar come in de market.

December 1 — I not pay ever at all. I not you noting owe. I not suffer dat I be eternal ask for money. I not speak you not more. Go to devvel for you ten dollaire, for dat I not slap you de visage.

THE RESTLESS BOARDER [1]

He come to me fust of de mont, an' say, "Madame, I must another room; I not can live in dat for de noise abominable vat make dose infants." And I reply him, "Monsieur, choose yourself vat room mos' you like."

Den he tell me to get him arrange one room on t'ird floor. I get room right morning. Evening he say, "Madame, I not can take dat room; I take back oder." So I change him de tings well more.

Next week he say, "Madame, I must anoder room obtain; I not can suffer more de noise of devils vat dose infants make." So I arrange room on fourt floor. In de evening he tell me his mind be change — dat he not more want dat oder room. So I have all for to move back again.

After, he come to me de t'irte-et', and say, "Madame, you get to me one oder room, dat for I not leave de house. No more can I suffer de noise infernal and ootrajeous vat make dose infants detestable." I say, "Monsieur, take vonce vat room you deseer, and leave me tranquille."

He den take room on front floor; but in middle night he go down gentle de stair and put all tings updownside, and go back in ole room. Den in de morning he tell my domestique to him aid, an' for more as five hour dey walk up de stair an' down de

[1] *Item*, October 27, 1879.

stair carr'ing much of valise an' of trunk an' of ole pantalons an' of washing-basin an' of pillow — and of pot. De vat me disguss.

At de end all at sudden he take oder room, and dere install him well — vat I much surprise. But not more be I surprise ven dat I see him go out from de house, away, an' one negro vat carry him de valise. And much be I content for dat I see it.

But I not long content.

De morning after I see a procession vat enter de house one time more — de negro, de valise, and he, and one boy vat carry him de tobacco-pot and boots. So he go up de stair, and put back himself to his ole room. Not ever in-no-matter-vat-place see I such tings.

Den he come to me an' say, "Madame, so some one ask after me, tell dem dat I am one mad." "Certainlee," I reply, "I will so dem tell, for dat it be true." But I not understand vat he mean precise until one hour more. Den come to house one man who ask if dat he vas not live here.

"Ah, oui," I say, "he live here, but he is one mad."

"So it is," he reply, "I tink; for as he come to pay me one mont advance, and never not again come back. So you give to him back his monis."

Den I be sorry for dat I tell he vas one mad; for dat I see he not one mad at all; — but only one devil vat desire torment all person vitout paying for his vickedness. So I give to him de money, but notice of quit he not take; and I not can yet guess how far dat I be get rid him.

FURNISHED ROOMS [1]

I NOT understan' for vat some peoples ask of prizes so much elevate for dere garneesh room — I much mistruss myself of such peoples; — I believe dey all be of vat mos' vicked.

Firs', I go for ask prize of room in my street of de ——, for dat I observe of sign "Room garneesh" at door. Dey to me show one room well garneesh on t'ird floor — one big more as one cell of monk, an' I ask of dem de prize. Dey tell me de prize be t'irty dollaire by week. So dat I find myself much astonish, and I ask for see one oder of room. So dey show to me one oder of room on second floor; an' I ask de prize — ven dey tell to me forty-tree dollaire by week. It be one room of behind; so I demand for dat I see one room of before for curiosité. Den dey tell me vat de room of before be fifty dollaire for me, but for any oder one seexty dollaire by week. So I begin to take dem for mads; and dey ask me if I not deseer to see one room of de firs' floor, an' I say, "No — deveel! Vat for I see one sacré room vat cos' one hoondred dollaire? — better as I buy to myself one hoondred dollaire of mustard!" "Not one hoondred of dollaire," dey téll — "not more as one seventy-five dollaire."

And ven dat I save myself from de house away,

[1] *Item*, November 2, 1879.

dey laugh like all vat be of mos' idiot. Seventy-five of dollaire! Seventy-five tousand of deveels!

After I go see again more of house, and I fine myself all astound. For de room vat I see of mos' good market dey ask seexteen dollaire by week — it be vat you call one attique. Oder rooms not be more as seventee, eightee, one hoondred dollaire by mont — always in advance to pay. Vat mos' I have not understan' be dat I not see one room rent in all of house — not even one. It make me to tink vat dey not ever be rent — even for dat dey have sign "Room garneesh." And I tink dey all vat be of mos' vicked — for dat how can dey make for pay rent vit room empties vitout as dey be not honeste? It is so as I tink, and I tink also dat de poleeses not ought — but de poleeses! de poleeses! — to vat good dat I talk of de poleeses!

MEXICAN COINS [1]

"Sit down, O sunburnt wanderer, sit down! — Well, well! And whence comest thou?"

"I come," he observed with grim solemnity, "from Mexico."

And he laid upon the table a striped blanket, a worn valise, and a heavy leathern bag whose contents clattered like castanets as it struck the mahogany — Mexican gold.

"Why, we thought you were dead — all these years, and not a word!"

"Dead!" he echoed; "yes, I was dead, dead to the century for which I was born, and to modern civilization — dead from 1870 to 1879. I feel like one of the Seven Sleepers awaking to find himself moving in a new age; I have been living in the seventeenth century, and suddenly I find myself in the nineteenth."

"In Mexico City?" we suggested.

"No: in Mexico City one hears at least some echoes from the outer world — no, in Matamoras and Sonora. Mexico City belongs in some respects to the present century; the life of the provinces does not. Time seems to have stood still there for two or three hundred years. The printing is certainly of the sixteenth century; many manufactures

[1] *Item*, November 3, 1879.

are even mediæval; and agriculture is antediluvian. I knew an American who was idiotic enough to attempt the introduction of steel ploughs — he would not have dared to speak of modern machinery."

"And he —"

"Became instantly an object of suspicion and detestation. Had they not their good wooden ploughs, such as were used in the time of Montezuma, and before him? — And why should a cursed Gringo come to them with ploughs of steel?"

"And the money?"

He took a yellow coin from the wallet and held it up. On one side the Mexican eagle strangled its serpent victim; upon the other a naked arm upheld the Cap of Liberty before the open pages of a book, whereon appeared the syllable "Ley."

"They say the coins of a country indicate to some extent its social condition," he said. "See how rude and coarse the milling is compared with that of the American coin. There is a suggestion of the barbaric in it. But I like the eagle better. There is a ferocious grace in its poise which makes the idealized American bird seem stiff and clumsy by comparison — I admire that savage eagle, tearing the serpent to shreds; — but it is a symbolic lie; there is nothing of the eagle in the Mexican and much of the serpent. The whole design is a lie. There is the Cap of Liberty; and yet there is no true liberty of thought and speech in Mexico; — there is the word 'law'; and they have no law; they are *sans foi ni loi ni roi.*

The coin is a braggart like the Mexican. Truly free nations do not boast too much of law and liberty."

"And the Exposition?"

"Ah, bah! — the Exposition! What have they to exhibit? Knives and revolvers and wooden ploughs?"

"Nothing else?"

"Ah, yes! — one Thing! — the one Thing in which Mexico defies competition. I believe I have brought a few specimens in my serape — magnificent specimens — which defy rivalry."

But when he ceased to speak, no answer fell upon his ear, and, turning himself thrice about, he found himself alone.

LOUISIANA PEOPLE NOT GAY [1]

"It seems to me," said the Parisian, "that in spite of an exquisite climate, the people of Louisiana are one of the most solemn-faced I ever saw. There is no real gayety under this glorious sky. People seldom laugh here; when they do, the laugh is apt to be cynical. Workmen do not sing while they work; boys seldom whistle when they go along the street. The farther south I go, the more I find this to be the case. It is true, the negroes sing; but their melodies are the saddest and weirdest I ever heard. Why, in Paris the workshops are merry as birds' nests — it is one ceaseless caroling from morning till night; and in European countries the singing of laborers and farmers is proverbial; song appears to be a part of their existence. I fancy that there must be something sad in the very intensity of life near the tropics."

"In some respects I agree with you," said the Englishman; "but I think the difference is due to the nature of the country. People do not sing in low flat countries, nor do they give vent to much reckless merriment. They sing in the mountains, and laugh among the hills. The hilly countries are the musical countries. Man seems happier the nearer he lives to the stars. It is not in low plains

[1] *Item*, November 4, 1879.

watered by great rivers like the Nile, the Ganges, or the Mississippi, that we need look for merriment; but among the mountain districts of Europe and America."

A CREOLE COURTYARD [1]

An atmosphere of tranquillity and quiet happiness seemed to envelop the old house, which had formerly belonged to a rich planter. Like many of the Creole houses, the façade presented a commonplace and unattractive aspect. The great green doors of the arched entrance were closed; and the green shutters of the balconied windows were half shut, like sleepy eyes lazily gazing upon the busy street below or the cottony patches of light clouds which floated slowly, slowly across the deep blue of the sky above. But beyond the gates lay a little Paradise. The great court, deep and broad, was framed in tropical green; vines embraced the white pillars of the piazza, and creeping plants climbed up the tinted walls to peer into the upper windows with their flower-eyes of flaming scarlet. Banana-trees nodded sleepily their plumes of emerald green at the farther end of the garden; vines smothered the windows of the dining-room, and formed a bower of cool green about the hospitable door; an aged fig-tree, whose gnarled arms trembled under the weight of honeyed fruit, shadowed the square of bright lawn which formed a natural carpet in the midst; and at intervals were stationed along the walks in large porcelain vases — like barbaric sentinels in sentry-boxes — gor-

[1] *Item*, November 11, 1879.

geous broad-leaved things, with leaves fantastic and barbed and flowers brilliant as hummingbirds. A fountain murmured faintly near the entrance of the western piazza; and there came from the shadows of the fig-tree the sweet and plaintive cooing of amorous doves. Without, cotton-floats might rumble, and street-cars vulgarly jingle their bells; but these were mere echoes of the harsh outer world which disturbed not the delicious quiet within — where sat, in old-fashioned chairs, good old-fashioned people who spoke the tongue of other times, and observed many quaint and knightly courtesies forgotten in this material era. Without, roared the Iron Age, the angry waves of American traffic; within, one heard only the murmur of the languid fountain, the sound of deeply musical voices conversing in the languages of Paris and Madrid, the playful chatter of dark-haired children lisping in sweet and many-voweled Creole, and through it all, the soft, caressing coo of doves. Without, it was the year 1879; within, it was the epoch of the Spanish Domination. A guitar lay upon the rustic bench near the fountain, where it had evidently been forgotten, and a silk fan beside it; a European periodical, with graceful etchings, hung upon the back of a rocking-chair at the door, through which one caught glimpses of a snowy table bearing bottles of good Bordeaux, and inhaled the odor of rich West India tobacco. And yet some people wonder that some other people never care to cross Canal Street.

THE CREOLE CHARACTER [1]

It was not a difficult job to put up a wooden awning about the corner grocery — two stout Irishmen would have done it in twenty-four hours; but the corner grocery man was a Creole, and he hired four Creole carpenters. So they took three weeks to do it, and they have not done it yet. Ce pas baptême katin, travail comme ça; and they did not propose to work themselves to death. Life was too short. We went round the corner to look at them. Beautifully did they saw the boards and with exquisite grace did they hammer the nails — vrais poseurs they were; and then they wiped their brows and sighed, and rolled up cigarettes and went into the grocery to get a light. There they met Aristide and Jules and Albert and Alcée and Alcibiade, and they all took a drink and cracked awful jokes together. Then the carpenters went out again, and climbed upon the half-finished awning, and grinned at a swarthy young woman passing, who had a graceful air of deportment and a complexion like a statue of bronze. Then they laughed at one another; and it began to rain, so they went down and smoked some cigarettes, until it was time for dinner. After dinner they worked very slowly, deliberately, and artistically for ten minutes, until a mad dog came run-

[1] *Item*, November 13, 1879.

ning down the street, which they chased for half a mile with surprising energy and astounding strength of purpose. And when they came back they recounted their heroic deeds to an admiring crowd in the grocery, and to the washerwoman round the corner, and the Italian fruit-woman over the way, and the wife of the rival grocery-keeper on the other side, and the two lazy policemen on the beat, and the cook of the neighboring boarding-house, and the confectioner at the southeast corner, and the shoemaker at the northwest corner, and the butcher at the southwest corner, and the coal woman just round the northeast corner. Then they got ready to work; and commenced to hammer away to the air —

"Madame Caba,
  Tiyon vous tombe;
Madame Caba,
  Tiyon vous tombe;
Ah, la reine,
  Piye la su' moi;
Madame Caba
  Piye la su' moi;
Madame Caba
  Chandelle 'te teigne," etc.

Then it got dark, and they took another drink and went home. And it was even so next day also, and the next, and so for twenty-three days; and that awning still remains in a wild and savage condition of incompleteness.

A KENTUCKY COLONEL RENTING ROOMS [1]

"Ah, one ting more — de name of monsieur?"

"Colonel Zachariah Mart— "

"Alors, alors, it must dat monsieur pay to me of advance."

"But why in thunderation did n't you tell me at first?"

"Ah, because monsieur did not tell to me vat he be one Colonel. I not have, monsieur, of fait' in peoples military. Dere vas one Captain vat swindle me of sixty dollaire, one Major vat cheat me of fifty dollaire, one Doctor Military of t'irty-nine dollaire, one Colonel of one hoondred and elefen dollaire. And dere vas one General vat ask me de oder day—"

"Yes, ma'am; but that don't apply to the Kaintucky —"

"Attendez donc, monsieur, until I be finish! De General say he nevaire pay of advance, but only all de tree mont. And den I tell him I not can do. He go way; so after I hear vat he owe tree hundred and ninety-seven dol— "

"But d—— ! — excuse me, ma'am! I'll shell out for a month in advance!"

[1] *Item*, November 15, 1879.

"One mont! Den, monsieur, I not ever can believe dat you ever have be one Colonel!"

"Well! I'll be Jehovahly —. . . !!!"

"Pauline! en haut-là! Descendez donc pour m'arranger cette affaire. Je suis tout embaralificotée!!!"

THE DAWN OF THE CARNIVAL [1]

THE Night cometh in which we take no note of time, and forget that we are living in a practical age which mostly relegates romance to printed pages and merriment to the stage. Yet what is more romantic than the Night of the Masked Ball — the too brief hours of light, music, and fantastic merriment which seem to belong to no century and yet to all? Somehow or other, in spite of all the noisy frolic of such nights, the spectacle of a Mardi Gras Ball impresses one at moments as a ghastly and unreal scene. The apparitions of figures which belong to other ages; the Venetian mysteries of the domino; the witchery of beauty half-veiled; the tantalizing salutes from enigmatic figures you cannot recognize; the pretty mockeries whispered into your ear by some ruddy lips whose syllabling seems so strangely familiar and yet defies recognition; the King himself seated above the shifting rout impenetrable as a Sphinx; and the kaleidoscopic changing and flashing of colors as the merry crowd whirls and sways under the musical breath of the orchestra — seem hardly real, hardly possible to belong in any manner to the prosaic life of the century. Even the few unimpassional spectators who remain maskless and motionless form so strange a contrast that they

[1] *Item*, February 2, 1880.

seem like watchers in a haunted palace silently gazing upon a shadowy festival which occurs only once a year in the great hall exactly between the hours of twelve and three. While the most beautiful class of costumes seem ghostly only in that they really do belong to past ages, the more grotesque and outlandish sort seem strangely suggestive of a goblin festival. And above all the charms of the domino! Does it not seem magical that a woman can, by a little bright velvet and shimmering silk, thus make herself a fairy? And the glorious Night is approaching — this quaint old-time night, star-jeweled, fantastically robed; and the blue river is bearing us fleets of white boats thronged with strangers who doubtless are dreaming of lights and music, the tepid, perfumed air of Rex's Palace, and the motley rout of merry ghosts, droll goblins, and sweet fairies, who will dance the dance of the Carnival until blue day puts out at once the trembling tapers of the stars and the lights of the great ball.

A MEXICAN'S GRATITUDE [1]

A PRETTY little story comes to me from Algiers.[2]

Some years ago, during the spring months, a vessel sailing from Vera Cruz arrived at this port with a swarthy Mexican crew. While toiling under the hot sun, one of the men became seriously ill; and when the vessel was ready to sail, it was found necessary to leave him behind. The circumstances are not precisely known to us, beyond the fact that a young girl found him early in the morning lying in the shadow of a pile of timber, a prey to one of those strange fevers that make one shiver with cold even under a sky of fire. He asked for water in his broken English, and the girl procured assistance from her home, which was not far off. Pity prevailed over all other considerations, and the stranger soon found himself in a comfortable bed with good medical attendance. The girl and her mother watched by his bedside and nursed him until he got well again. As he was only a poor sailor, utterly penniless, he could not even offer to recompense them: and as he could not speak English beyond such few words as a stranger picks up in a foreign port, he could not even thank them by word of mouth. Before he had even fully recovered his health, he left the house in spite of the old lady's remonstrances, and, kissing her hand

[1] *Item*, April 12, 1880. [2] A suburb of New Orleans.

with every sign of gratitude, he went his way. As he was never seen there again, it was supposed that he had been able to ship upon some Spanish vessel.

...Long afterward, it happened, by some strange chance, that the young Algerine above referred to found herself in the City of Montezuma. She had been married and was accompanied by her husband. One morning, just as the two had turned from the Plaza into a side-street a small, swarthy man, with gold rings in his ears, and carrying a large basket on his back, approached them, fixed his black eyes for a moment on the young lady's face, and with the sole explanation, "Madre de Dios! es la señorita!" fell upon his knees in the dirty street, and, seizing her hands, covered them with kisses, while tears of gratitude streamed down his bronzed face. The husband, a Cuban, who had often heard the story of the sailor, naturally understood and accepted the situation; while the little Mexican poured out his soul in comparisons of the young wife to guardian angels and saints and virgins, and in those strangely beautiful Spanish compliments which, when sincerely uttered, caress the soul of the hearer. And then, unfastening the strap of his basket and exposing its tempting cargo of luscious fruits and rich flowers, he besought her, upon his knees, to permit him to bear it to her residence as a gift.

"Tell him," she said to her husband, who acted as interpreter, "that we cannot accept his present, and that the pleasure of having been able to help him

when in need is more than sufficient compensation for the service."

He begged so hard, however, that she was obliged to accept a handsome bouquet of flowers, and, imploring all the saints of Heaven to bless her, he departed sadly with his basket.

But it seems that he followed her home unawares; for every morning afterward, during her stay in Mexico, just as the mountain-peaks commenced to flush in the rosiness of dawn, the servant was awakened by a knocking at the street-door, and opened it only to find there a basket of fair fruits and tropical flowers that exhaled a perfume as passionate as the gratitude of the giver.

ATTENTION! AZIM! [1]

EDITOR CITY ITEM — Your columns contained a few days ago a recipe for gombo which contained neither okra filé nor fine herbs. Please give one from a genuine Creole cook, omitting nothing of the delicious compound so dear to Crescent City gourmands, and made in perfection nowhere else.

AZIM

WE have just been to see a "genuine Creole cook," and one of the best in the city, who gives us the following receipts:

GOMBO FÉVI

A whole chicken — if chicken cannot be had, veal will serve instead; a little ham; crabs, or shrimps, or both, according to the taste of the consumer; okra according to the quantity of soup needed; onions, garlic, parsley, red pepper, etc. Thicken with plenty of rice. The gombo févi is made with green and fresh gombo or okra cut up. It would be no use to attempt to lay down rules in regard to the proportion in which the above ingredients are to be used, as there are not, perhaps, two Creole cooks who follow the same recipe exactly. Everything depends on taste and experience.

[1] *Item*, July 8, 1880.

GOMBO FILÉ

This is made exactly like the other, but with pulverized okra instead of fresh green okra, and oysters are also used, in proportion to the quantity of soup needed. If Azim needs further information, he must inform us, and we shall send him to a first-class Creole cook, with whom he can converse at leisure.

We fear that the good old Creole lore is rapidly disappearing, not merely in regard to cooking, but also in regard to natural medicine. The herb medicines of the old Creole nurses were matchless; and doctors were seldom called into Creole homes in the old days except in desperate cases. There were family secrets in regard to tisanes and cataplasms and purgatifs which boasted a San Domingo or a Martinique origin, and which many good old black women averred had come from Africa in the first years of American slavery — the only heirlooms which aged obi-men could bequeath to their slave children. Many of these secrets are kept with something of religious awe. Neither love nor money nor menaces could extort them from the owners. If childless, it is more than likely the secret will die with their owners; if they have children, these generally inherit the mystical power, but hardly ever do they seem in this generation to obtain the success of their fathers and mothers. We have often suggested that all the extant knowledge in regard to Creole cookery and

herb medicine, so far as it is possible to obtain it, should be collected and published. Such a publication would not only be a literary curiosity, but also a work of rare practical value, and we sincerely believe the editor of such a work might find the investment a paying one. It would be hopeless to attempt a *complete* work of such a description, for reasons which we have often given; but there remains a great deal which can be obtained and which is of great value. With time and leisure we should wish for no better or more agreeable employment than the collection and arrangement of such curiosities.

AN ULTRA-CANAL TALK[1]

(STRANGER approaches an ancient Creole house, rings the bell, and beholds the landlady. Landlady says something. Stranger loquitur in surprise:)

"He is dead?"

"Oh, oui, monsieur; 'e ees det, and dere is not person sorry. 'E vas all vat vas of most troublesome. All ze time vat 'e liv, I have troubles vit peoples vat come to see 'im. For everybody know 'im to be one mad, who like to spend his money in foolishness and bêtises. After his son die he not have nobody for 'im look after. So dey come to sell to 'im litograph, vich dey make 'im to believe to be oil painting by great master; an' 'e pay one, two, tree hoondred dollaire for litograph vich cost no more as fifty cent. Ven I tell 'im not buy, 'e tell me I vas one ignorant and one imbecile vich have not appreciation of art. After, ven 'e fin' out not oil painting, 'e call zem curssed camel — two-hump camel, an' heap of robber (tas de voleurs) and charogne; an' 'e wish dem all blast by ze feefty tousand flames of hell. So zat 'e not talk of oder tings — only of robbers and liars and assassinses.

"Ven zey could not more sell to 'im play-bills as oil-painting of great master, zey sell to 'im of daub as great water-color picser. 'E pay seventee dol-

[1] *Item*, July 13, 1880.

laire for vat cos' not more as tree cent each. Ze frames wort perhaps six dollaire! At las' 'e fine out how zey 'im swindle; an' 'e talk of robber an' murderer an' camel of two hump. And 'e say dis country ze most curssed country vat exist — all vat be of mos' canaille and racaille and charogne.

"Ven as dey not could no more to 'im sell picser, zey sell to 'im vat you call céramique, old cup and saucer and dish vat wort not more as ten cent and vat dey tell 'im from China come. 'E pay t'irty dollaire, as dey tell 'im very 'ard for find. But 'e find one day undare bottom of cup one word like 'BIRMINGHAM'; and 'e swear so dreadful vat I have me de finger in de ear to put. After 'e not talk more but of tief and liar, and of assassin and of infames and infant of ze devill and children of 'ell — vich 'e wish open and swallow zis sacré charogne de pays. And 'e also say more vat I not you dare racount.

"Also dey sell to 'im boots vat sole vat of paper was made and coat vat was glueded together, an' I not ever could 'im prevent to pay fiftee dollaire for ze coat an' ten dollaire for ze boot. Sixtee dollaire! And ven zat ze boot go into pieces an' ze coat tomble into rag, 'e could not enough to swear in such manner zat people hear 'im more as tree block. Ze same night 'e swear all night so as no one could fall 'imself to sleep. 'E said tings so terrible zat I stuff to me de ears wit cotton; but all same I hear 'im swear until ze sun get 'imself up.

"After, dey sell 'im furnisser, armoire, table, bed, chair for mahogany — vat was pine covered wit sometings. 'E pay tree hoondred dollaire! Ze table was only glueded and one day it burst ven he dere put to 'im de elbow; and ze bed also only glueded together. 'E go to law, but ze oder peoples much vas rich, and 'e lose five hoondred dollaire wit lawyer an' 'e soon tire of law.

"After zey sell to 'im vine vat not vas vine and fisky vat not vas fisky an' 'e pay like one millionaire zough 'e not have much of money. Not ever could I prevent 'im to buy or to be swindle."

"Did he say anything before he died?"

"I tink so! 'E not sick — never sick at all. 'E die sitting in ze berceuse. For 'e vas very old, very, very much old. And some one came to sell to 'im sometings. 'E try to get up; but not could, and 'e not let me to help 'im. So I not help 'im; and 'e say, 'Mon bon Dieu, have me mercy — Oh, le tas de canaille! Pray you for me! Oh, les sacrés voleurs! Lord have me pity! — Charogne de pays! — I believe me in de heaven for ze good! Oh, de curssed wretch! — Holy angel 'elp me up! — Oh, ze camel of two hump! — Oh, mon Dieu, miséricorde! — zis be one infame country of assassin and robbaire!' So 'e pray an' so 'e swear. So 'e die wit — 'Charogne de pays!' And ven ve sell of 'im ze picsers for vat 'e pay one fortune, dey bring not more as tree dollaire an' t'irdeen cent. But 'e 'ave near one hoondred years ven dat 'e be dead. I tink 'e ought have to be det."

A CREOLE SONG [1]

THE following has been brought to us by a charming lady, herself a Creole, who tells us that it was a popular song in Louisiana at the beginning of this century:

Moin pas conné qui quichose
  Qui appé tourmente moin là;
Moin pas conné qui la cause,
  Cœur a moin brulé comme çà.
Ah Die! Qui tourment, qui peine,
  Dipis longtemps quimbé moi;
C'est tourment la passé chaine,
  Plutôt moin mouri yonné fois.

Toi conné qui belle rigole
  Qui coulé dans bananiers.
Où toi té sé fé la folle
  La foi qui toi té baigné.
D'leau la pas coulé encore —
  Des fois il 'rète tout court —
Li semble regrette encore
  Li pas baigné toi toujours.

Here is a free translation:

I do not know what it is which torments me thus.
I cannot tell what it is that makes my heart beat so.
O God! what torture! what pains I have suffered so long!
It is worse than the pain of fetters; I had rather die at once.
Do you remember the pretty little brook that ran through the banana-trees —
Where you used to have such fun, when you used to bathe?
That water has ceased to run; —

[1] *Item*, July 26, 1880.

A CREOLE SONG

Since the time it stopped all at once —
It seems to me it died of regret
That its wavelets could not embrace you forever.

This translation, as we have already observed, is very free, but contains the spirit of the little song. We shall be very grateful to any of our readers who will bring us some more of these curiosities.

THE GRANDISSIMES [1]

At last it has come out in book form, this strange, weird, powerful, and pathetic story, which is certainly the most remarkable work of fiction ever created in the South.

It is difficult to render any idea of what this book is without making copious extracts. It is a dream which is not all a dream, a tale which is but half a tale, a series of pictures which, although in a certain sense created by the pencil of an Impressionist, wear a terrible resemblance to terrible realities. There are chapters which affect the imagination like those evil dreams in which dead faces reappear with traits more accentuated than the living originals ever possessed.

Is this strange New Orleans which grows up under Mr. Cable's wand our own New Orleans? It is; and yet it is something more. It is such a city as a wanderer sees by night in his dreams, who has left the shores of the Father of Waters for the icy winds and snow-shrouded scenes of some far-Northern winter; — a Southern metropolis, her streets paved with the gold of summer suns, her shadowy trees whose leaves never fall, her flowers that never die, her streets quaintly constructed like the Latin cities of the older continent, and all the motley clamor of a

[1] *Item*, September 27, 1880.

semi-tropical land in which even the sharp accents of European tongues lose their firmness, and old languages obtain a new softness and sweetness and languor. And there is all this inexpressible glamour, and yet more, in the familiar and yet unfamiliar New Orleans of "The Grandissimes."

If it be so with the scenes, with the characters it is also so. We have seen these characters, and yet we have not seen them. Or, to describe our own impression still more correctly, we believe that we have seen them somewhere, and yet are not quite sure — like one greeted by some stranger whose features are not unfamiliar, but whose name is forgotten.

There is, therefore, a certain vagueness about the work. But it is an artistic vagueness, like the golden haze of an Indian summer softening outlines and beautifying all it touches. The old streets seemed clouded with a summer mist; the voices of the people speaking in many tongues came to the reader as from a great distance. Yet why not? Is he not looking back and listening to the speaking shadows of another era, when Claiborne first came to Louisiana?

Yet the vagueness is never too vague. Sometimes the scenes are dimmed, but it is when the reader's eyes are dimmed by that moisture which it is the artist's triumph to evoke. Sometimes the scenes become terribly vivid, however, as in the death of Bras-Coupé, or the tragic end of Clémence. There is no dreaminess in those powerful pictures. Nor is there any in that painful incident when the apothe-

cary reads the letter to Palmyre. This scene, not even excepting the execution of Clémence, seems to us the most vividly truthful in the book. It is less tragic, less exciting, less terrible than others; but it is a genre study of inimitable verisimilitude.

If there be one special characteristic of Mr. Cable's style that is specially striking, we believe it is his power of concentrated description. What could be more pithily forcible, more briefly comprehensive, more intensely impressive than the following description of an interior furnished in the old-fashioned Creole style? One must have seen such, however, to appreciate the power of these few lines:

> . . . the rooms were so sumptuously furnished: immovable largeness and heaviness, lofty sobriety, abundance of finely wrought brass mounting, motionless richness of upholstery; much silent twinkle of pendulous crystal, a soft semi-obscurity — such were the characteristics.

Or this:

> . . . The plantation became an invalid camp. The words of the Voudoo found fulfillment on every side. The plough went not out; the herds wandered through broken hedges from field to field and came up with staring bones and shrunken sides; a frenzied mob of weeds and thorns wrestled and throttled each other in a desire for standing-room — rag-weed, smart-weed, sneeze-weed, bind-weed, iron-weed — until the burning skies of midsummer checked their growth and crowned their unshorn tops with rank and dingy flowers.

We doubt whether this book, in spite of its delicate merit, will become a favorite with residents of

the Creole city; — its spirit has already been severely criticized by a contemporary; — its paintings are not always flattering to native eyes; — its evocation of dead memories will not be found pleasing. We cannot perceive that the merit of the romance is at all marred, nevertheless, by Mr. Cable's own peculiar views; and if we were inclined to criticize anything unfavorably in it, we should only question the reality of Honoré Grandissime. Was there ever a Creole of Creoles, living in such an age, who could have entertained such ideas on social questions?

There are very curious chapters upon Voudooism in this book; and we cannot share the opinion of many that it is a mere "absurd superstition." We believe it to be, or at least to have been, a serious and horrible reality; and we know of most intelligent families among our French-speaking population who share this opinion. Those who have really given serious attention to the subject have doubtless found that the traditions of Voudooism in Louisiana and elsewhere have at least as much claim to belief as the history of the aqua Tofana or of the secret poisoners of the Middle Ages.

We must specially call the attention of our readers to the Creole songs and refrains, published with the music, throughout the work. They are very curious, and possess a special philologic value. One, in particular, an African chant, sung by the negroes in cutting down the cane, deserves special notice.

But we cannot attempt to criticize Mr. Cable's

book further. It must be read to be appreciated. We have not even attempted to tell the public what it is. We have only undertaken to express in a few words the peculiar impression which, as a work of art, it produces upon the reader.

A CREOLE MYSTERY [1]

THEY came together from Havana, mistress and servant. The mistress had a strange and serpentine sort of beauty; — the litheness of a snake in every movement; — the fascination of an ophidian; — and great eyes that flamed like black opals. One felt on meeting her that the embraces of lianas and of ivy were less potent to fetter than hers — and to fetter forever. Her voice was remarkably sweet, but had strangely deep tones in it; — and her laugh caused a feeling of unpleasant surprise. It was a mocking, weird, deep laugh, uttered without any change of features; there was no smile, no movement of the facial muscles; the lips simply opened and the laugh came pealing from her white throat, while the eyes, large, brilliant, and sinister with mockery, fixed themselves with motionless lids upon the face of the person present. But she seldom laughed.

None knew who she was. She was a mystery to the French people of the quarter. Her rooms were luxuriously furnished and hung in blue satin. At long intervals strangers called upon her — men of olivaceous complexion and hair tropically black with dead-blue lights in it. They spoke only in Spanish; and their interviews lasted far into the night. Sometimes they seemed to be gay. Gossipy

[1] *Item*, October 6, 1880.

people said they heard the popping of champagne corks; and a perfume of Havana tobacco floated out of the windows and hung about the shrubbery that enshrouded the veranda. Sometimes, however, there were sinister sounds as of men's voices raised in anger, and at intervals the deep laugh of the mysterious woman, long and loud and clear, and vibrant with mockery.

The servant was a mulattress, tall and solidly constructed as a caryatid of bronze. She was not less of a mystery than her mistress. She spoke French and Spanish with equal facility, but these only on rare occasions. Generally no mute in the seraglio of a Sultan could be more silent or more impassible. She never smiled. She never gossiped. She never seemed to hear or to see; yet she saw and heard all. Only a strange face could attract her attention — for a brief moment, during which she gazed upon it with an indescribable look that seemed potent enough to burn what it touched. It was a look that made its living object feel that his face was photographed in her brain and would be equally vivid there fifty years after. The foreigners who came were received by her in silence and without scrutiny. Their faces were doubtless familiar. None of them ever spoke to her. She seemed to be more than a Doppelgänger, and to appear in five or six different rooms at the same time. Nothing could transpire unperceived by her; though she seemed never to look at anything. Her feet were never heard. She moved like a phan-

tom through the house, opening and closing doors noiselessly as a ghost. She always suddenly appeared when least expected. When looked for, she was never to be found. Her mistress never called her. When needed, she appeared to rise suddenly from the floor, like those Genii of Arabian fables summoned by a voiceless wish. She never played with the children; and these hushed their voices when she glided by them in silence. With a subtle intelligence seemingly peculiar to her, she answered questions before they were fully asked. She never seemed to sleep. Persons who visited the house were as certain to meet her at the entrance three hours before sunrise as at any other hours. She appeared to be surprised at nothing, and to anticipate everything. She was even a greater mystery, if possible, than her mistress.

At last the swarthy foreigners called more frequently and the interviews grew stormier. It was said that sometimes the conversations were held in Catalan; and that when Catalan was spoken there were angrier words and wickeder laughing. And one night the interviews were so terrible that all the old-fashioned French folks in the quarter put their heads out of the windows to listen. There were sounds as of broken glass and passionate blows given to the mahogany table. And the strange laughter suddenly ceased.

Next morning the postman calling to deliver a registered letter found the rooms empty. The spec-

tral servant was gone. The sinister mistress was gone. The furniture was all there; and the only records of the night's mystery were two broken glasses and stains of wine on the rich carpet. The bed had been undisturbed. The clock still ticked on its marble pedestal. The wind moved the blue silk hangings. A drowsy perfume of woman lingered in the rooms like incense. The wardrobes retained their wealth of silks and laces. The piano remained open. A little Angora cat was playing with a spool of silk under the table. A broken fan lay on the luxuriously padded rocking-chair; and a bouquet of camellias lay dying upon the mantelpiece.

The letter was never delivered. The rooms remained as they were, until mould and dust came to destroy the richness of their upholstery. The strangers never came back, nor did any ever hear what became of them. The mystery remains unexplained. The letter remains in the dead-letter office. But I would like to open it and find out what is in it; — would n't you?

ELEUSIS [1]

Cool, soft light broken by curtains of lace; antiquated and elegant upholstery; a four-columned Creole bed, generously wide and lofty, its lace-fringed pillows embroidered with a rosy monogram; matting checkered in light colors; a bronze clock bearing the nude figure of Ariadne riding upon her loving panther; a glimmer of satin flung carelessly over fauteuils and sofas; a mysterious perfume of woman; a sense of some one absent, and a consciousness of wicked intrusion on the part of the writer — feelings intensified by the merciless ticking of the French clock: — this was Eleusis!

And the Mysteries?

Ah! the pretty mysteries; the dainty, soft, delicate, fragile, feminine mysteries! Fairy gauze and butterfly-satin, and moth-velvet and foamy lace and frosted silk, and that white samite — mystic, wonderful — which invites the hand to touch it with a timid caress, and the name whereof is only known to Woman; — and over all a hovering perfume — the perfume of youth, the odor of all that is sweet and feminine, the ambrosia that haunts the presence of Loveliness and clings to her robes — the frankincense of the Shulamitess!

This was the shadowy nook where the human

[1] *Item*, November 12, 1880.

butterfly nightly prepared to issue from her pallid chrysalis; the chamber where the pretty witch spun her web of magical gold.

> "My thread is slim, my thread is fine,
> But he must be
> A stronger than thee
> Who can break this thread of mine."

And the reader murmureth, perchance, that he is yet no wiser than he was before.

Behold! the mystery into which we would initiate thee, O reader, is a mystery of bayadères, a mystery of dancing girls "robed only in a fleecy cloud of veils," that mystery of the daughter of Herodias which made the king swear a great oath that he should give her all that she desired, even unto the half of his kingdom.

When thou beholdest the dancing girl coming forth to dance before the bow-curving line of lights; — when thou beholdest her poised in air, shimmering in foamy laces and creamy satin like some splendid insect; — when thine eyes are dazzled by the witchery of her feet so that thou even wishest to be a Herod that thou mightest offer her, not the half, but in sooth the whole of thy kingdom — dost thou not often marvel at the mysteries of her garb? — enticing only to deceive coquettishly — seemingly light as a Coæ vesta or a ventus textilis such as Egyptian dancers wore, yet faithfully guarding its secrets — thin as a dragonfly's wings, yet subtle enough to

withstand the long strain of a pas de séduction? Let us, then, abandon the romance of idealism and descend to the level prose of explanation.

In dressing for the ballet, the fair dancer must disrobe as completely as for the bath. A thin and very short chemise is the first article put on. It is peculiarly shaped, cut low, and has pieces to support it from the shoulders. Then the ordinary corset is put on. Then come the tights.

The tights are of flesh-colored silk, and all in one piece. They take the place of stockings and drawers, and are brought up over the hips and fastened with soft but strong tape above the waist and even over the corset. The whole body up to the bosom is gloved in them. If nicely adjusted, and not too often worn, their own elasticity keeps them from wrinkling.

Over the tights a pair of muslin drawers are worn, about as narrow and short as a boy's bathing-drawers. These are of gossamer lightness, but exceedingly white. They are worn for moral reasons.

Over the drawers are six of the lightest petticoats of tulle or tarlatan, whereof it is possible to conceive. These are all attached together at the waistband, so as to form but one piece. Light as they are, their number and starchiness enable them to preserve the graceful shape which gives the ballet dancer the appearance of some beautiful white fly.

Over the six petticoats a seventh, often equally

light, but of much more brilliant material, is worn. Sometimes it is decked with flowers, sometimes fringed with lace; sometimes it is white; sometimes it is pink, scarlet, purple, or other color, according to the character of the drama. In Spanish or Italian dances it is very brilliant.

A corset of soft white satin is next put on over the tights and under-corset. Over this is worn a bodice of lace, of silk, of velvet, or other material, according to the character of the dance. In ordinary ballet dances, however, all is white, even the slippers.

O the pretty little slippers! They have no heel, and are of the lightest imaginable; — white or pink satin. The uppers are heavily stitched with cotton all about the sole, so as to protect the satin wherever the pressure of the foot flattens it to a level with the leather. At the toe, where the main pressure is, the stitching is so thick and heavy as to form a pad. The slipper catches the heel firmly and is further secured with strong tape.

And then the dancer is attired. The coiffure is a separate matter, and varies according to circumstances.

But, alas! the little slippers can be used only once or at most twice; the tights must be frequently renewed; the tulle petticoats must be incessantly replaced; nearly all this fragile fairy costume continually demands renovation. The laces and upper ornamental apparel alone endure. So that every dancer must carry with her quite a little shoe-store; for in

one opera season many dozens of shoes are worn out, and then they are useless, except for rehearsals.

And now our Eleusis having been sufficiently explained, we do propose to say nothing more upon the subject, and leave the reader to dream of — whatever he pleases!

LATIN AND ANGLO-SAXON [1]

THE French papers in Canada have latterly warned their readers that the Canadian French are being slowly but surely absorbed by the Anglo-Saxon element, and have been advising them to push forward into the valley of the Ottawa and there found settlements. This may possibly be done; but the end will, no doubt, be the same. The Canadian French have, nevertheless, been among the most thrifty, energetic, and enterprising pioneers in the world; certainly no other men with Latin blood in their veins ever showed more endurance and daring than the famous coureurs des bois and chasseurs de loutre. If the French Canadian is to be absorbed by the Anglo-Saxon element, we cannot avoid asking ourselves what chance the French element of Louisiana can have to resist absorption when the flood of emigration begins to pour southward with the advancing lines of railway?

The chances, in our opinion, are rather in favor of the Canadian French resisting longer than our own Creoles — unless the French element should be kept up by a continuous immigration. Old manners and customs and dialects and families endure longer in a severe Northern climate than in a semi-tropical land like our own. As we near the tropics decay becomes

[1] *Item*, November 24, 1880.

more rapid — not only material decay of substance, but decay of social conditions and institutions as well. Our French element is not composed, however, of such stern stuff as the French people of Canada. They have become semi-tropicalized here; — they have felt the enchantment of a climate of perennial mildness, and have lived for generations under very different conditions to those which have hardened and invigorated the French people of Canada. It must be remembered also that the French Canadians have had to resist the strongest absorbing influences possible — those of the English, Scotch, and Irish elements in all their purity and force. The geographical position of Louisiana, her climate, and her comparative isolation only recently broken by new railroad lines, have aided the Louisiana Creoles in maintaining their individuality and their pleasant old-fashioned manner of existence.

We have often attempted to analyze the cause of the undoubted predominance of the Anglo-Saxon race wherever it plants itself. Many causes have been adduced, but none seem to us satisfactory. The Latin races are not less hardy and enduring, though inferior in physical strength. They are not less intelligent, though less self-denying. They are not less patriotic, though more cosmopolitan. They possess a number of sterling qualities which are wholly foreign to Anglo-Saxon, Teutonic, or Scandinavian character. In our opinion the real secret of the predominance of Northern races lies in the

same causes which may partly account for the conquest of the Western Empire by the Goths, after the Roman armies had been fairly worn out in repelling barbaric invasion. The Northern races are far more prolific than the Latin. The Germans of to-day, for example, are filling up America with emigrants. What Latin race can send out such armies of emigrants? Probably not all the Latin races together could do so! The fact is not perhaps flattering to the Northern races of Europe; for it is said that the lower organizations propagate most rapidly in all the orders of nature. But history confirms the fact that the real strength of a people lies not in valor and endurance alone, but in its capacity of self-multiplication. Nor is this comforting to think of when we gaze toward China. Idea is stronger than force for a time only; force at length will carry all before it.

A VISITOR [1]

"JUAN GUERRERO Y MARQUEZ, su servidor de V."

There are voices which surprise by their sonority. The voice of the speaker, as he introduced himself, made us lift our eyes in surprise to his face; — it was a soft roll of thunder, the richest and deepest bass that had ever vibrated in the writer's ears. To have heard it without seeing the speaker would have compelled the idea that it came from a chest of prodigious depth, from the torso of a giant. Not so, however. The speaker was a young and rather slender man, firmly knit, but with more grace than apparent strength in his frame; not over tall, but with a bearing as proud as his Spanish name. He spoke with the refined accent of Madrid, and the words came from his lips with such a musical depth as when the longest strings of a great harp are touched by strong and skillful fingers. The face was characteristic — a true Latin face, with the strong keenness of the Roman eagle in its profile; eyes large and brilliant as a falcon's; eyebrows thick as mustaches, rising toward the temples, with a slightly sinister elevation; mustaches curling up toward the cheek-bones; and such a short black pointed beard as we see in the portraits of Velasquez. This handsome and daring face belonged to a beautifully formed head, covered with

[1] *Item*, November 26, 1880.

the blackest curls possible to conceive — the head of an antique Roman soldier set upon a columnar neck. With the clear bronze of his skin, no more striking type of the finest of the Latin races could have been asked for by a painter.

Artista español de los primeros, he had been traveling with a Spanish opera company through the West Indies, and enchanting the señoritas of Havana with the magic of his marvelous voice. Now he wished to visit some distant relatives in one of the far South American republics — members of his own Spanish family and bearing his own name, but born under the Southern Cross. He had never seen them; but strangely enough the ancestral family in Spain had maintained relations with its tropical children for a hundred years.

"And there is really a consul of that republic in New Orleans?" we asked in bewilderment; for, alas! we had never heard of him.

"Ciertamente, señor!"

So we went to find the consul. It was necessary, first, to find out who he was, and where he lived. The directory refused to yield up the desired information. Then we went successively to see a Spanish tobacconist and a Spanish wine merchant and a Spanish doctor and a Spanish apothecary and a Spanish journalist — who was not at home — and a certain Spanish lady who lives upon a street bearing the name of an ancient Spanish Governor.

It proved easier, however, to find who the consul

was than to find where he resided. At one time we began to fancy that he was an illusion or a phantom. Seven different places did we visit in which he had formerly resided, but resided no longer — so that we felt even as wayfarers who vainly pursue after a will-o'-the-wisp.

And a young woman passed by, graceful as a panther, carrying a basket upon her arm. Her eyes were very large and black; her skin the color of gold; and her figure owned those indescribable curves, that cambrure de taille for which there is no expression in the English tongue.

"Que es bonita!" exclaimed the singer, with a caressing accent in his deep voice. If the woman did not hear the compliment, she had at least heard the Spanish tongue; for she suddenly turned, and, poised in an attitude of supreme grace like a statue of bronze, addressed the artista in a voice clear as a silver bell: — "A quien busca V., señor?" And their black eyes met. It was a tropical look: the man fascinated by the serpent grace of the woman; the woman not seeking to conceal her admiration of the handsome youth before her. Yes: she knew where the consul — Señor Don Alejandro — lived. It was just at the corner. "Mil gracias, señorita!" Not a Spanish girl, no — from some strange town with an Aztec name in the heart of Mexico. "Yo estaba allá!" cried the artist joyfully: "I remember it well — the plaza, and the old house of Señor —— on the corner, where I spent some very pleasant days when

I was traveling through Mexico." And then recalling old memories, they forgot for a moment all about the distant South American republic and the phantom consul. Adios — a clasp of olive-skinned hands; and with the old-fashioned and tender commendation to God, they departed, never to meet again — as seabirds flying over the sea to opposite coasts look into each other's eyes a moment and pass on.

"I have been to your opera," he said, "I like it. But neither the French nor the Italians know what the Spanish theatre is. It is not merely music and drama. It is a school. It is a medium of national instruction. It teaches feeling, expression, deportment, dress, courtesy, taste, appreciation of the beautiful. And that is why Spanish audiences are so difficult to please."

"I wish I could hear you sing," we said.

"Lo me gustaria mucho," he returned; "but I leave to-night. And you could not judge of what I can do unless you should hear me in the theatre. Do you smoke?" And he presented us with a real "puro."

Suddenly an organ at the corner struck up a fragment of *Faust* — the Gloria chorus of the soldiers. "Ah! I love that," he murmured; and suddenly the martial air rolled from his lips in tones rich and deep, but golden-clear as the voice of a mighty organ. It was only for a moment; but in that moment the children ceased their dances, and people passing

through the old-fashioned streets paused and turned and wondered at the witchcraft of that marvelous voice.

"Adios, señor!" And we parted forever.

CREOLE SERVANT GIRLS [1]

CREOLE colored servants are very peculiar. They are usually intelligent, active, shrewd, capable. They generally perform well whatever they undertake. They are too intelligent to be dishonest, knowing the probable consequences. They comprehend a look, an expression, as well as an order; they will fulfill a wish before it is expressed. They see everything, and hear everything, and say nothing. They are consummate actresses, and can deceive even the elect. They can ape humility, simulate affection, pretend ignorance, and feign sorrow so that the imitation is really better than the reality would be, and serves the same purpose. They can tell a lie with the prettiest grace imaginable, or tell a truth in such a manner that it appears to be a lie. They read character with astonishing quickness, and once acquainted with the disposition of their employer will always anticipate his humors and make themselves pliable to his least wish. They are the most admirable waiting-machines which ever existed; — absolutely heartless, without a particle of affection or real respect for an employer or his children, yet simulating love and respect so well that no possible fault can be found with them. Once initiated into the ways of a household, it is seldom necessary to

[1] *Item*, December 20, 1880.

give them an order. They know everything that is required, and everything is done. If regularly paid and well treated, they will remain in a family for a generation. They demand a great deal of liberty when not actually employed, and will not remain in a house when they are not wholly free after working hours to go out or in as they please. They know everything that is going on, and a great deal more than they have any business to know. If they consider their employer discreet, they will furnish him unasked with the strangest secret news. They possess family histories capable of doing infinite mischief, but seldom make use of them, except among each other. To strangers they are absolutely deaf and blind — neither bribes nor promises will extort information from them when asked by persons they do not know. They can keep people at a distance without offending; and become familiar to any extent without making themselves disagreeable. They can be superlatively vicious, and yet appear to be supremely virtuous. They can also be dangerous enemies — and there is no denying the fact that their enmity is to be dreaded. They speak several languages, and sing weird songs. They will do anything that any imagination can conceive for money; and are very friendly, indeed, as long as the money holds out. They are actually very cleanly, oddly superstitious, and very diligent. They have a way of working very hard without appearing to work, and of doing little or no work while appearing to be

working themselves to death. Their virtues are simply the result of a great natural shrewdness, which appears to have been handed down from old times, with the Latin blood that beats in the veins of French-speaking quadroons and mulattresses. They will not steal; but they have no moral scruples when the infringement of morality does not involve public disgrace and legal punishment. They do not like American or English-speaking people; and it is probable that none but Creoles know how to manage them. The type is fast disappearing; but it certainly affords one of the most extraordinary studies of human nature possible to conceive.

HOME [1]

We have all heard curious things said about the peculiarities of New Orleans; we have heard that it was a city where the sun rose in the west and water ran uphill; we have heard it spoken of as built upon a dunghill, and there is a Spanish proverbial expression about it still more uncomplimentary, often uttered by West India captains, which we dare not cite, even in the original. But yesterday we received a visit from an old resident of thirty years' standing, who in the course of a conversation summed up his opinion of New Orleans with the phrase: "New Orleans is a city where it is impossible to make a home for one's self without marrying. I have tried for thirty years to make a home here, and failed." And this observation set us to meditating whether this were, indeed, owing to any peculiarity of the city, or to that vague longing for the quiet comforts of a household which all bachelors feel as life creeps by and each succeeding winter adds its frost to their beards. To the latter, we trust; for we wish to think well of New Orleans.

There is one thing certain: a rich man who understands what the comforts of life are may make a home for himself anywhere without marrying. But rich men form exceptions to the general rule govern-

[1] *Item*, January 8, 1881.

ing human lives, and we are constrained to consider the matter from the standpoint of those who are not rich, and who must expect for the greater part of their lives to work for others, however independent their capacity as artisans or talent as professional men may render them. The more sensitive their disposition and the more artistic their ideas, the more difficult, of course, must it be for them to obtain a home conformable to their desires whether married or unmarried. If unmarried, they may expect to have a hard time of it in any city, if compelled to live there for a number of years. Luckily for themselves, many such men are of wandering dispositions. They soon tire of a city; pack up and go elsewhere, after refusing good offers or neglecting first-class chances of becoming wholly independent by remaining. Being rolling stones, they gather no golden moss; and change of scenery and climate, new places and new faces, new friends and strange experiences become for them almost a necessity of life. These are the world's Bohemians. They are a class apart. They enjoy life, too, in a peculiar fashion which the generality of quiet people of regular habits do not understand. But there are many who, desiring to continue single, and obliged to live where fortune has cast their lot or run the risk of losing all and beginning the struggle with the world over again, do forever pursue after the chimera of a home, and cannot understand, until they have tried all possible expedients and suffered all varieties of disappoint-

Bourbon Street, New Orleans

On the right of this street, which is in the old Creole quarter, is a house where Hearn once had his lodgings

ments, why they cannot make a home for themselves. To such as these, of course, the idea of a home is coupled with memories of the home of one's youth — cozy rooms, quiet, good fare, kindly attention, liberty to act and think, something to regret leaving, and to delight returning to of evenings; — a pleasant greeting, a dog barking with joy, a cozy chair by the fire, and a cat purring on the rug. And yet how one can obtain these things without a woman's ministry nobody has ever pretended to explain. A woman is the soul of home; and without her there is little more than furniture and brick walls there. She transforms and beautifies everything. You may pooh-pooh and hum-hum! — but you cannot explain how the comforts of a home — a home such as the term was explained to us in childhood — can possibly be obtained without the presence of woman. Without her one may be said to live at such and such a place; but to say that "he has his home there" is sheer humbug. He has no home!

Consequently many really marry just to obtain a home — which is foolish enough, although the natural consequence of social conditions. We remember one case in this city — a young Frenchman who was continually changing his quarters for years, never being able to find rest or comfort in any one house. At first he had quite a number of effects; but these he gradually disposed of, because they proved serious impediments to his nomadic life, until at last his baggage consisted of a newspaper bundle

and a box of matches. His marriage proved unhappy enough in the end. He drew an unlucky number in this great life lottery of ours. But to return to the point under consideration: what home is there for men circumstanced like those we spoke of? Boarding-houses do not offer any. Boarding-houses are good and necessary institutions — but there is no home life about them. No man who longs for home comforts can live in any one boarding-house beyond a certain length of time, or in a hotel. There is no privacy, no seclusion; one is always being brought into contact with persons whom one does not care to know, and obliged to endure things which one does not like to stomach. Life in a private family is better; but, of course, the private-family boarder is always made to feel that he is not one of the family, and the manner of making him feel it is not the most agreeable thing in the world. Renting furnished rooms and boarding in restaurants, or "boarding around" as they call it, is vanity and vexation of spirit, and costs about as much as hotel fare without rendering one any more independent. Furnished rooms! — Furnished rooms! It is an awful, awful subject — too awful to dilate upon! Neither is there any stability about such a method of living. If one does find just what suits him, he can never tell how long it will last; but of one thing he must always be sure — that the better it seems the sooner something dreadful and unexpected is going to happen. And then?

HOME

Well, when you have become tired of boarding-houses and restaurants and furnished rooms, you may try renting or buying a house of your own and furnishing it. But a man must have something round the house, if it is only a dog, to keep him company. And he must also have somebody to take care of his rooms. If he gets a housekeeper, to avoid scandal he must get the oldest and ugliest woman he can find. And servants and others victimize the bachelors terribly. Moreover, everybody living near such a man will regard him as a lunatic or an original, and treat him accordingly. The hand of society is raised against the man who tries to live alone in a house of his own — unless he be very rich. Sometimes five or six bachelors get together, as we have known them to do in the French quarter, furnish a house, hire a housekeeper, and live a sort of club-life by themselves. But if they should fall out, the whole arrangement would prove more disagreeable than all the combined afflictions common to furnished rooms and boarding-houses.

There is no consolation. To get a home, one must get rich or marry, and even then he may not be lucky enough to get it.

OLD-FASHIONED HOUSES [1]

PROBABLY there are as fine residences in New Orleans as in any other city of equal population in the United States; and the almost tropical beauty of the grounds and gardens which surround them lends them a charm that cannot be found in many other cities of North America. Most of these fine residences are built upon designs entirely different from the prevailing architecture of New Orleans houses; and it is pleasant to observe that a new style of building even small houses is coming into fashion in different parts of the city. Few of us can afford to live in palaces; and excepting residences that are absolutely palatial, there are very few comfortable dwellings, comparatively speaking, in the Crescent City. There is much picturesqueness; but picturesqueness is not comfort: there is much of outward charm in old-fashioned places, in quaint rooms, in audacious balconies, in mediæval-looking dormers, in peaked roofs, in maisonettes tinted lemon-yellow, pale rose, or faint green; but all this does not give the coziness of a home. The New Orleans of half a century ago is not suited to the wants of the New Orleans of today. The population has increased; there are infinitely fewer rich people here than formerly; there are many more inhabitants to the square mile, and

[1] *Item*, January 12, 1881.

the great houses which formerly constituted the winter residences of wealthy planters and others must now be portioned out among many families or transformed into boarding-houses in order to be made profitable to their owners. A change in the old style of building dwellings is becoming more and more imperative every succeeding year.

The causes of the old style of building are attributable to a wholly different social condition which still existed a generation ago; and there is really no reason why it should survive at present. Nevertheless, we frequently see new houses in process of erection, being constructed upon precisely the same uncomfortable and antiquated plans which should be abolished forever. We have nothing to say against the outward appearance of New Orleans houses. The general effect is very pleasing; — no one with an artistic eye can avoid loving the zigzag outline of peaked roofs with the pretty dormers; the iron arabesques of graceful balconies, the solid doors and burglar-proof shutters, so brightly green. The old-fashioned houses are by no means ugly. But their interior arrangement is altogether condemnable and renders them almost unfit for modern homes. Take, for example, the ordinary double cottages of which there are thousands upon thousands in New Orleans. Not only do all the rooms open into each other, either with large folding or sliding or the ordinary doors; but each room of each house often opens into each room of its twin on the other side. Thus there

are from two to three doors to each room, besides windows; rendering it difficult to warm any apartment in a damp New Orleans winter. Privacy is impossible; seclusion a mockery. Even the attics of two houses open into one another. Suppose one is looking for a house, and expresses his dissatisfaction with this plan, the proprietor will exclaim with astonishment: "Why! there is a door; and the door is closed!" A thin door does not ensure seclusion or even quiet. Every sound can be heard distinctly in both houses — the crying of children in the night; family quarrels; noises of household work; and many other things which should not be heard at all. And the doors are not even double. In nine cases out of ten daylight shows through them. The same thing renders it very difficult to obtain comfortable furnished rooms in the city. Every room opens into another; and every movement of one's neighbor or neighboress is distinctly audible. All this might be avoided by the construction of hallways; and certainly it is not for want or value of space that we have so few hallways in the city. Immense rooms, high and airy! — but cold and comfortless — opening into other immense rooms — all opening into other houses: of such there is no end.

Now if there is one thing more essential than any other to the comfort of a house, it is seclusion! The English understand this fact even better than the Americans, and their cottages are model homes. When a man enters his house he wishes to be able

when he pleases to shut himself up from the rest of the world, to be alone with his family or with his thoughts, to rest himself after the day's anxieties without further turmoil or annoyance. But how is he to do this when he finds only a partition thin as the cover of a novel between himself and others who are not of his family, and who live practically on the same floor and almost in the same room? If he wishes to enjoy an hour in his private study, it is not pleasant to be obliged all the time to listen to noises in the next room, even if made by his own servants or his own children. For members of a family themselves require at times to seclude themselves from other members of the family; — there are business matters to be talked of; there are projects which children or servants should not hear; there are numberless things which the heads of a household wish to discuss by themselves. And to warm such houses in winter there must be a fire in every room upon the same floor; otherwise one will find that folding doors are a mockery and sliding doors a vexation of spirit. The double cottage is an abomination; and even the single cottage without a hallway is an affliction. Is it agreeable to be unable to go to bed either without passing through somebody else's room or having somebody else passing through your room? It is not even a civilized way of living; and certainly a vast majority of New Orleans houses would appear to a stranger to have been constructed with little regard to common decency. The truth is simply

that twenty-five years ago people here lived very differently from what they can afford to do now; — everything was on a larger and more generous scale; and perhaps the dwellings were excellently adapted at that time to the wants of their tenants. To-day all is changed. Picturesque and uncomfortable New Orleans must disappear to give place to one perhaps less outwardly attractive but less illusive and more substantial. The result will certainly be less consumption and less rheumatism.

SOME POSITIVE OPINIONS [1]

In a curiously illustrated edition of Balzac's "Peau de Chagrin" there is a strange and terrible face which some of you may remember having seen: it is the face of the bric-à-brac dealer who sold the mysterious parchment — a forehead of immense breadth; a nose like that of Mephisto in Retsch's outlines; a mouth thin, straight, and passionless; eyes large and sinister, with brows knotted above the nose like adders and rising wickedly toward the temples — in short, a face most sinister, most infernal, but withal fascinating with a diabolic fascination. Now, can you imagine such a visage transformed and softened by youth and femininity, made beautiful without losing its strength of menacing wickedness; the nose a little less rugged, the eyes a little larger, the brows a little lighter? Then you have before you an idea of the dancer's face.

We sat and talked under the fig-tree. At least *she* talked; I listened under the steady gaze of her basilisk eyes. She seemed to speak all modern tongues fluently; had excited passion by her lithe grace and surpassing skill of limb-curving in half the capitals of Europe. She talked about Havana, Buenos Ayres, Valparaiso, Vera Cruz, Mexico City; described Spanish dances in a mocking way peculiar to herself,

[1] *Item*, April 27, 1881.

speaking all the while in a voice deep and sweet as the lower tone of some reed instrument. But the depth of the voice and its sweetness wrought an unpleasant effect upon the listener — such an effect as a wizard's music might have, luring to danger.

"I hate men," she said, with Italian vehemence, and an indescribable gesture of disgust; — "oh, how I detest them! It amuses me when I am dancing to think of all those thousand eyes glaring upon me, as at something they are almost mad to touch and cannot reach, and dare not touch if they could. It gives me pleasure; and often when I smile on the stage the smile is not mechanical; it is prompted by a sense of amusement which is too strong for me to resist. I know that hundreds of young fools will leave the theatre devoured with a wish they cannot gratify. Ah! I hate men!

"Of course you know as well as I do that they pester and torment us. I am burdened with letters, presents — stuff! Love! Ah, bah! In a life such as mine one soon learns what love is worth! I used to read the letters I got. Now I seldom read more than the first line! Presents? Yes, all I want.

"Let me tell you my way of treating the fools. I never answer a letter unless it is accompanied by a present — and the present must have some value. Flowers! — I hate flowers! What good are flowers to me? What value have flowers twenty-four hours after being thrown at my feet? I would be as pleased

to receive a jar of ashes or a box of sand. Do you imagine I would pick up their worthless flowers? Never! I can always find some way to avoid that.

"Then I never answer in writing — never! No woman who is not an idiot will do that. I let somebody else carry my message — always worded in such a way that the fool imagines it is the greatest privilege in the world to be permitted to see me. When he does see me, he pays dearly for it, if he is worth anything; and if he is not — which I soon find out — he never sees me again — except on the stage. And then it amuses me to know how I can torture him.

"I never say a pleasant word to an admirer. Why, if I did, the fool would really think he had made an immense impression! I have my own special way of treating him; he always brings me a present, of course. I never thank him! Never! I look at it; find fault with it; laugh at it; mock the man; and finally when he does not know what to do, I condescend to lay it aside. That means acceptance. He buys a better present next time; every time he buys me something, I treat him worse than before. Much worse! I have tormented men until they cried — yes, cried: the ridiculous fools!

"No; the worse you treat men, the better they like you! And you know it is all passion — wind and foam and smoke — a fancy — a passing beat of the blood, for which a man would sacrifice my life and happiness if he could and dared! But I know them!

I can play with them as an angler plays with a fish! I sometimes let them kiss me if they are not too nasty — or feel my arms and shoulders, smooth me down — you know the way men like to stroke a woman, as if a woman was a cat! But I have a certain respect for myself. I believe in nothing but myself — and my mother, yes! Now, do you suppose I will allow men to make me their puppet, their doll, their kitten, their lemon to be squeezed and thrown away? Bah! I can play salamander. I am a juggler that can handle fire without burning my fingers. I can touch pitch and not be defiled. No man can boast of the contrary. There are liars who say such things about all stage characters; but what do I care? I have made men pay well for all that men have said about me.

"Afraid? Pooh! Of what? I know desperate men when I see them. I have not lived and traveled for nothing. And I calculate my time nicely. I know just what I can accomplish during my stay in a city. And do you know that no man has dared to insult my face? I mean coarsely and abusively. They are afraid of me. The secret of success in life is to make people afraid of you. Only fools remain on the defensive. I am always on the aggressive. Insult! — I would poniard a man if I saw a thought of insult in his eyes! Law! What do I care for law? I am a law unto myself. Why, a woman has always the advantage in such cases. Suppose I say: 'That man came to see me under some pretext. He attempted

to take advantage; I know how to take care of myself; — I killed him!' Who will contradict me?

"Lover! Nonsense! Perhaps, when I leave the stage! But I shall be mistress. Do you think I would allow a man to say to me, Do this, Do that?

"I forgot what I was telling you — when I allow a man to kiss me, he begins to be elated. He thinks he has an easy road before him. He begins to look confident. He becomes airy. Then the day after I refuse to speak to him, or see him at all! He feels as if struck by lightning. He imagines all kinds of things — that he has been slandered or something. He wants to make an explanation. He becomes pathetically eloquent. He writes crazy letters. I pay no attention to him. He becomes feverish, furious, frantic, desperate. He would sell his soul just to be able to say one little word to me; — one little word would be for him what one little drop of water would be to the tongue of the damned. And he cannot get the chance to speak. He thinks of killing somebody. Then is the time to step in and ask and receive. Finally they learn to hate me. That is just what I want, and this is how I rid myself of them. The Fools!"

VOICES OF DAWN [1]

A dreadful sound is in his ears. — Job xv, 21.

THERE have never been so many fruit-peddlers and viand-peddlers of all sorts as at the present time — an encouraging sign of prosperity and the active circulation of money.

With the first glow of sunlight the street resounds with their cries; and, really, the famous "Book of London Cries" contains nothing more curious than some of these vocal advertisements — these musical announcements, sung by Italians, negroes, Frenchmen, and Spaniards. The vendor of fowls pokes in his head at every open window with cries of "Chick-EN, Madamma, Chick-EN!" and the seller of "Lem-ONS — fine Lem-ONS!" follows in his footsteps. The peddlers of "Ap-PULLS!" of "Straw-BARE-eries!" and "Black-Brees!" — all own sonorous voices. There is a handsome Italian with a somewhat ferocious pair of black eyes, who sells various oddities, and has adopted the word "lagniappe" for his war-cry — pronouncing it Italianwise.

He advances noiselessly to open windows and doors, plunges his blazing black glance into the interior, and suddenly queries in a deep bass, like a clap of thunder, "LAGNIAPPA, Madam-a! — la-

[1] *Item*, July 22, 1881.

gniap-PA!" Then there is the Cantelope Man, whose cry is being imitated by all the children:

"Cantel-lope-ah!
Fresh and fine,
Jus from the vine,
Only a dime!"

There are also two peddlers, the precise meaning of whose cries we have never been able to determine. One shouts, or seems to shout, "A-a-a-a-ah! SHE got." Just what "SHE got" we have not yet been able to determine; but we fancy it must be disagreeable, as the crier's rival always shouts — "I-I-I! — I want nothing!" with a tremendous emphasis on the I. There is another fellow who seems to shout something which is not exactly proper for modest ears to hear; but he is really only announcing that he has fine potatoes for sale. Then there is the Clothespole Man, whose musical, quavering cry is heard at the distance of miles on a clear day, "Clo-ho-ho-ho-ho-ho-ho-se-poles!" As a trilling tenor he is simply marvelous. The "Coaly-coaly" Man, a merry little Gascon, is too well known as a singer to need any criticism; but he is almost ubiquitous. There is also the fig-seller, who crieth in such a manner that his "Fresh figs!" seems to be "Ice crags!" And the fan-sellers, who intend to call, "Cheap fans!" but who really seem to yell "Jap-ans!" and "Chapped hands!" Then there is the seller of "Tow-wells" and the sellers of "Ochre-A" who appear to deal in but one first-class quality of paint, if we

SOME CHINESE GHOSTS

SOME CHINESE GHOSTS

* * *

THE SOUL OF THE GREAT BELL

She hath spoken, and her words still resound in his ears.
HAO-KHIEOU-TCKOUAN: C. IX.

THE water-clock marks the hour in the Ta-chung sz' — in the Tower of the Great Bell: now the mallet is lifted to smite the lips of the metal monster — the vast lips inscribed with Buddhist texts from the sacred "Fa-hwa-King," from the chapters of the holy "Ling-yen-King!" Hear the great bell responding! — how mighty her voice, though tongueless! — KO-NGAI! All the little dragons on the high-tilted eaves of the green roofs shiver to the tips of their gilded tails under that deep wave of sound; all the porcelain gargoyles tremble on their carven perches; all the hundred little bells of the pagodas quiver with desire to speak. KO-NGAI! All the green-and-gold tiles of the temple are vibrating; the wooden goldfish above them are writhing against the sky; the uplifted finger of Fo shakes high over the heads of the worshipers through the blue fog of incense! KO-NGAI! — What a thunder tone was that! All the lacquered goblins on the palace cornices wriggle their fire-colored tongues! And after each huge shock, how wondrous the multiple echo and the great

golden moan and, at last, the sudden sibilant sobbing in the ears when the immense tone faints away in broken whispers of silver — as though a woman should whisper, "Hiai!" Even so the great bell hath sounded every day for well-nigh five hundred years — Ko-Ngai: first with stupendous clang, then with immeasurable moan of gold, then with silver murmuring of "Hiai!" And there is not a child in all the many-colored ways of the old Chinese city who does not know the story of the great bell — who cannot tell you why the great bell says Ko-Ngai and Hiai!

Now, this is the story of the great bell in the Ta-chung sz', as the same is related in the "Pe-Hiao-Tou-Choue," written by the learned Yu-Pao-Tchen, of the City of Kwang-tchau-fu.

Nearly five hundred years ago the Celestially August, the Son of Heaven, Yong-Lo, of the "Illustrious," or Ming, dynasty, commanded the worthy official Kouan-Yu that he should have a bell made of such size that the sound thereof might be heard for one hundred li. And he further ordained that the voice of the bell should be strengthened with brass, and deepened with gold, and sweetened with silver; and that the face and the great lips of it should be graven with blessed sayings from the sacred books, and that it should be suspended in the centre of the imperial capital, to sound through all the many-colored ways of the City of Pe-king.

Therefore the worthy mandarin Kouan-Yu as-

sembled the master-moulders and the renowned bell-smiths of the empire, and all men of great repute and cunning in foundry work; and they measured the materials for the alloy, and treated them skillfully, and prepared the moulds, the fires, the instruments, and the monstrous melting-pot for fusing the metal. And they labored exceedingly, like giants — neglecting only rest and sleep and the comforts of life; toiling both night and day in obedience to Kouan-Yu, and striving in all things to do the behest of the Son of Heaven.

But when the metal had been cast, and the earthen mould separated from the glowing casting, it was discovered that, despite their great labor and ceaseless care, the result was void of worth; for the metals had rebelled one against the other — the gold had scorned alliance with the brass, the silver would not mingle with the molten iron. Therefore the moulds had to be once more prepared, and the fires rekindled, and the metal remelted, and all the work tediously and toilsomely repeated. The Son of Heaven heard, and was angry, but spake nothing.

A second time the bell was cast, and the result was even worse. Still the metals obstinately refused to blend one with the other; and there was no uniformity in the bell, and the sides of it were cracked and fissured, and the lips of it were slagged and split asunder; so that all the labor had to be repeated even a third time, to the great dismay of Kouan-Yu. And when the Son of Heaven heard these things, he

was angrier than before; and sent his messenger to Kouan-Yu with a letter, written upon lemon-colored silk, and sealed with the Seal of the Dragon, containing these words:

> From the Mighty Yong-Lo, the Sublime Tait-Sung, the Celestial and August — whose reign is called "Ming" — to Kouan-Yu the Fuh-yin: Twice thou hast betrayed the trust we have deigned graciously to place in thee; if thou fail a third time in fulfilling our command, thy head shall be severed from thy neck. Tremble, and obey!

Now, Kouan-Yu had a daughter of dazzling loveliness, whose name — Ko-Ngai — was ever in the mouths of poets, and whose heart was even more beautiful than her face. Ko-Ngai loved her father with such love that she had refused a hundred worthy suitors rather than make his home desolate by her absence; and when she had seen the awful yellow missive, sealed with the Dragon-Seal, she fainted away with fear for her father's sake. And when her senses and her strength returned to her, she could not rest or sleep for thinking of her parent's danger, until she had secretly sold some of her jewels, and with the money so obtained had hastened to an astrologer, and paid him a great price to advise her by what means her father might be saved from the peril impending over him. So the astrologer made observations of the heavens, and marked the aspect of the Silver Stream (which we call the Milky Way), and examined the signs of the Zodiac — the Hwang-

tao, or Yellow Road — and consulted the table of the Five Hin, or Principles of the Universe, and the mystical books of the alchemists. And after a long silence, he made answer to her, saying: "Gold and brass will never meet in wedlock, silver and iron never will embrace, until the flesh of a maiden be melted in the crucible; until the blood of a virgin be mixed with the metals in their fusion." So Ko-Ngai returned home sorrowful at heart; but she kept secret all that she had heard, and told no one what she had done.

At last came the awful day when the third and last effort to cast the great bell was to be made; and Ko-Ngai, together with her waiting-woman, accompanied her father to the foundry, and they took their places upon a platform overlooking the toiling of the moulders and the lava of liquefied metal. All the workmen wrought their tasks in silence; there was no sound heard but the muttering of the fires. And the muttering deepened into a roar like the roar of typhoons approaching, and the blood-red lake of metal slowly brightened like the vermilion of a sunrise, and the vermilion was transmuted into a radiant glow of gold, and the gold whitened blindingly, like the silver face of a full moon. Then the workers ceased to feed the raving flame, and all fixed their eyes upon the eyes of Kouan-Yu; and Kouan-Yu prepared to give the signal to cast.

But ere ever he lifted his finger, a cry caused him

to turn his head; and all heard the voice of Ko-Ngai sounding sharply sweet as a bird's song above the great thunder of the fires — "For thy sake, O my Father!" And even as she cried, she leaped into the white flood of metal; and the lava of the furnace roared to receive her, and spattered monstrous flakes of flame to the roof, and burst over the verge of the earthen crater, and cast up a whirling fountain of many-colored fires, and subsided quakingly, with lightnings and with thunders and with mutterings.

Then the father of Ko-Ngai, wild with his grief, would have leaped in after her, but that strong men held him back and kept firm grasp upon him until he had fainted away and they could bear him like one dead to his home. And the serving-woman of Ko-Ngai, dizzy and speechless for pain, stood before the furnace, still holding in her hands a shoe, a tiny, dainty shoe, with embroidery of pearls and flowers — the shoe of her beautiful mistress that was. For she had sought to grasp Ko-Ngai by the foot as she leaped, but had only been able to clutch the shoe, and the pretty shoe came off in her hand; and she continued to stare at it like one gone mad.

But in spite of all these things, the command of the Celestial and August had to be obeyed, and the work of the moulders to be finished, hopeless as the result might be. Yet the glow of the metal seemed purer and whiter than before; and there was no sign of the beautiful body that had been entombed there-

in. So the ponderous casting was made; and lo! when the metal had become cool, it was found that the bell was beautiful to look upon, and perfect in form, and wonderful in color above all other bells. Nor was there any trace found of the body of Ko-Ngai; for it had been totally absorbed by the precious alloy, and blended with the well-blended brass and gold, with the intermingling of the silver and the iron. And when they sounded the bell, its tones were found to be deeper and mellower and mightier than the tones of any other bell — reaching even beyond the distance of one hundred li, like a pealing of summer thunder; and yet also like some vast voice uttering a name, a woman's name — the name of Ko-Ngai!

And still, between each mighty stroke there is a long low moaning heard; and ever the moaning ends with a sound of sobbing and of complaining, as though a weeping woman should murmur, "Hiai!" And still, when the people hear that great golden moan they keep silence; but when the sharp, sweet shuddering comes in the air, and the sobbing of "Hiai!" then, indeed, do all the Chinese mothers in all the many colored ways of Pe-king whisper to their little ones: "Listen! That is Ko-Ngai crying for her shoe! That is Ko-Ngai calling for her shoe!"

THE STORY OF MING-Y

The ancient Words of Kouei — Master of Musicians in the Courts of the Emperor Yao:

When ye make to resound the stone melodious, the Ming-Khieou —
When ye touch the lyre that is called Kin, or the guitar that is called Ssé —
Accompanying their sound with song —
Then do the grandfather and the father return;
Then do the ghosts of the ancestors come to hear.

Sang the Poet Tching-Kou: "Surely the Peach-Flowers blossom over the tomb of Sië-Thao."

Do you ask me who she was — the beautiful Sië-Thao? For a thousand years and more the trees have been whispering above her bed of stone. And the syllables of her name come to the listener with the lisping of the leaves; with the quivering of many-fingered boughs; with the fluttering of lights and shadows; with the breath, sweet as a woman's presence, of numberless savage flowers — "Sië-Thao." But, saving the whispering of her name, what the trees say cannot be understood; and they alone remember the years of Sië-Thao. Something about her you might, nevertheless, learn from any of those Kiang-kou-jin — those famous Chinese story-tellers, who nightly narrate to listening crowds, in consideration of a few tsien, the legends of the past. Something concerning her you may also find in the book entitled "Kin-Kou-Ki-Koan," which signifies in our tongue: "The Marvelous Happenings of Ancient

and of Recent Times." And perhaps of all things therein written, the most marvelous is this memory of Sië-Thao:

Five hundred years ago, in the reign of the Emperor Houng-Wou, whose dynasty was Ming, there lived in the City of Genii, the city of Kwang-tchau-fu, a man celebrated for his learning and for his piety, named Tien-Pelou. This Tien-Pelou had one son, a beautiful boy, who for scholarship and for bodily grace and for polite accomplishments had no superior among the youths of his age. And his name was Ming-Y.

Now when the lad was in his eighteenth summer, it came to pass that Pelou, his father, was appointed Inspector of Public Instruction at the city of Tching-tou; and Ming-Y accompanied his parents thither. Near the city of Tching-tou lived a rich man of rank, a high commissioner of the government, whose name was Tchang, and who wanted to find a worthy teacher for his children. On hearing of the arrival of the new Inspector of Public Instruction, the noble Tchang visited him to obtain advice in this matter; and happening to meet and converse with Pelou's accomplished son, immediately engaged Ming-Y as a private tutor for his family.

Now as the house of this Lord Tchang was situated several miles from town, it was deemed best that Ming-Y should abide in the house of his employer. Accordingly the youth made ready all things necessary for his new sojourn; and his parents, bid-

ding him farewell, counseled him wisely, and cited to him the words of Lao-tseu and of the ancient sages:

> By a beautiful face the world is filled with love; but Heaven may never be deceived thereby. Shouldst thou behold a woman coming from the East, look thou to the West; shouldst thou perceive a maiden approaching from the West, turn thine eyes to the East.

If Ming-Y did not heed this counsel in after days, it was only because of his youth and the thoughtlessness of a naturally joyous heart.

And he departed to abide in the house of Lord Tchang, while the autumn passed, and the winter also.

When the time of the second moon of spring was drawing near, and that happy day which the Chinese call "Hoa-tchao," or, "The Birthday of a Hundred Flowers," a longing came upon Ming-Y to see his parents; and he opened his heart to the good Tchang, who not only gave him the permission he desired, but also pressed into his hand a silver gift of two ounces, thinking that the lad might wish to bring some little memento to his father and mother. For it is the Chinese custom, on the feast of Hoa-tchao, to make presents to friends and relations.

That day all the air was drowsy with blossom perfume, and vibrant with the droning of bees. It seemed to Ming-Y that the path he followed had not been trodden by any other for many long years; the

grass was tall upon it; vast trees on either side interlocked their mighty and moss-grown arms above him, beshadowing the way; but the leafy obscurities quivered with bird-song, and the deep vistas of the wood were glorified by vapors of gold, and odorous with flower-breathings as a temple with incense. The dreamy joy of the day entered into the heart of Ming-Y; and he sat him down among the young blossoms, under the branches swaying against the violet sky, to drink in the perfume and the light, and to enjoy the great sweet silence. Even while thus reposing, a sound caused him to turn his eyes toward a shady place where wild peach-trees were in bloom; and he beheld a young woman, beautiful as the pinkening blossoms themselves, trying to hide among them. Though he looked for a moment only, Ming-Y could not avoid discerning the loveliness of her face, the golden purity of her complexion, and the brightness of her long eyes, that sparkled under a pair of brows as daintily curved as the wings of the silkworm butterfly outspread. Ming-Y at once turned his gaze away, and, rising quickly, proceeded on his journey. But so much embarrassed did he feel at the idea of those charming eyes peeping at him through the leaves, that he suffered the money he had been carrying in his sleeve to fall, without being aware of it. A few moments later he heard the patter of light feet running behind him, and a woman's voice calling him by name. Turning his face in great surprise, he saw a comely servant-maid, who said

to him, "Sir, my mistress bade me pick up and return you this silver which you dropped upon the road." Ming-Y thanked the girl gracefully, and requested her to convey his compliments to her mistress. Then he proceeded on his way through the perfumed silence, athwart the shadows that dreamed along the forgotten path, dreaming himself also, and feeling his heart beating with strange quickness at the thought of the beautiful being that he had seen.

It was just such another day when Ming-Y, returning by the same path, paused once more at the spot where the gracious figure had momentarily appeared before him. But this time he was surprised to perceive, through a long vista of immense trees, a dwelling that had previously escaped his notice — a country residence, not large, yet elegant to an unusual degree. The bright blue tiles of its curved and serrated double roof, rising above the foliage, seemed to blend their color with the luminous azure of the day; the green-and-gold designs of its carven porticos were exquisite artistic mockeries of leaves and flowers bathed in sunshine. And at the summit of terrace steps before it, guarded by great porcelain tortoises, Ming-Y saw standing the mistress of the mansion — the idol of his passionate fancy — accompanied by the same waiting-maid who had borne to her his message of gratitude. While Ming-Y looked, he perceived that their eyes were upon him;

they smiled and conversed together as if speaking about him; and, shy though he was, the youth found courage to salute the fair one from a distance. To his astonishment, the young servant beckoned him to approach; and opening a rustic gate half veiled by trailing plants bearing crimson flowers, Ming-Y advanced along the verdant alley leading to the terrace, with mingled feelings of surprise and timid joy. As he drew near, the beautiful lady withdrew from sight; but the maid waited at the broad steps to receive him, and said as he ascended:

"Sir, my mistress understands you wish to thank her for the trifling service she recently bade me do you, and requests that you will enter the house, as she knows you already by repute, and desires to have the pleasure of bidding you good-day."

Ming-Y entered bashfully, his feet making no sound upon a matting elastically soft as forest moss, and found himself in a reception-chamber vast, cool, and fragrant with scent of blossoms freshly gathered. A delicious quiet pervaded the mansion; shadows of flying birds passed over the bands of light that fell through the half-blinds of bamboo; great butterflies, with pinions of fiery color, found their way in, to hover a moment about the painted vases, and pass out again into the mysterious woods. And noiselessly as they, the young mistress of the mansion entered by another door, and kindly greeted the boy, who lifted his hands to his breast and bowed low in salutation. She was taller than he had deemed

her, and supplely slender as a beauteous lily; her black hair was interwoven with the creamy blossoms of the chu-sha-kih; her robes of pale silk took shifting tints when she moved, as vapors change hue with the changing of the light.

"If I be not mistaken," she said, when both had seated themselves after having exchanged the customary formalities of politeness, "my honored visitor is none other than Tien-chou, surnamed Ming-Y, educator of the children of my respected relative, the High Commissioner Tchang. As the family of Lord Tchang is my family also, I cannot but consider the teacher of his children as one of my own kin."

"Lady," replied Ming-Y, not a little astonished, "may I dare to inquire the name of your honored family, and to ask the relation which you hold to my noble patron?"

"The name of my poor family," responded the comely lady, "is Ping — an ancient family of the city of Tching-tou. I am the daughter of a certain Sië of Moun-hao; Sië is my name, likewise; and I was married to a young man of the Ping family, whose name was Khang. By this marriage I became related to your excellent patron; but my husband died soon after our wedding, and I have chosen this solitary place to reside in during the period of my widowhood."

There was a drowsy music in her voice, as of the melody of brooks, the murmurings of spring; and

such a strange grace in the manner of her speech as Ming-Y had never heard before. Yet, on learning that she was a widow, the youth would not have presumed to remain long in her presence without a formal invitation; and after having sipped the cup of rich tea presented to him, he arose to depart. Sië would not suffer him to go so quickly.

"Nay, friend," she said; "stay yet a little while in my house, I pray you; for, should your honored patron ever learn that you had been here, and that I had not treated you as a respected guest, and regaled you even as I would him, I know that he would be greatly angered. Remain at least to supper."

So Ming-Y remained, rejoicing secretly in his heart, for Sië seemed to him the fairest and sweetest being he had ever known, and he felt that he loved her even more than his father and his mother. And while they talked the long shadows of the evening slowly blended into one violet darkness; the great citron-light of the sunset faded out; and those starry beings that are called the "Three Councillors," who preside over life and death and the destinies of men, opened their cold bright eyes in the northern sky. Within the mansion of Sië the painted lanterns were lighted; the table was laid for the evening repast; and Ming-Y took his place at it, feeling little inclination to eat, and thinking only of the charming face before him. Observing that he scarcely tasted the dainties laid upon his plate, Sië pressed her young guest to partake of wine; and they drank several

cups together. It was a purple wine, so cool that the cup into which it was poured became covered with vapory dew; yet it seemed to warm the veins with strange fire. To Ming-Y, as he drank, all things became more luminous as by enchantment; the walls of the chamber appeared to recede, and the roof to heighten; the lamps glowed like stars in their chains, and the voice of Sië floated to the boy's ears like some far melody heard through the spaces of a drowsy night. His heart swelled; his tongue loosened; and words flitted from his lips that he had fancied he could never dare to utter. Yet Sië sought not to restrain him; her lips gave no smile; but her long bright eyes seemed to laugh with pleasure at his words of praise, and to return his gaze of passionate admiration with affectionate interest.

"I have heard," she said, "of your rare talent, and of your many elegant accomplishments. I know how to sing a little, although I cannot claim to possess any musical learning; and now that I have the honor of finding myself in the society of a musical professor, I will venture to lay modesty aside, and beg you to sing a few songs with me. I should deem it no small gratification if you would condescend to examine my musical compositions."

"The honor and the gratification, dear lady," replied Ming-Y, "will be mine; and I feel helpless to express the gratitude which the offer of so rare a favor deserves."

The serving-maid, obedient to the summons of a

little silver gong, brought in the music and retired. Ming-Y took the manuscripts, and began to examine them with eager delight. The paper upon which they were written had a pale yellow tint, and was light as a fabric of gossamer; but the characters were antiquely beautiful, as though they had been traced by the brush of Heï-song Ché-Tchoo himself — that divine Genius of Ink, who is no bigger than a fly; and the signatures attached to the compositions were the signatures of Youen-tchin, Kao-pien, and Thou-mou — mighty poets and musicians of the dynasty of Thang! Ming-Y could not repress a scream of delight at the sight of treasures so inestimable and so unique; scarcely could he summon resolution enough to permit them to leave his hands even for a moment.

"O Lady!" he cried, "these are veritably priceless things, surpassing in worth the treasures of all kings. This indeed is the handwriting of those great masters who sang five hundred years before our birth. How marvelously it has been preserved! Is not this the wondrous ink of which it was written: 'Po-nien-jou-chi, i-tien-jou-ki — After centuries I remain firm as stone, and the letters that I make like lacquer'? And how divine the charm of this composition! — the song of Kao-pien, prince of poets, and Governor of Sze-tchouen five hundred years ago!"

"Kao-pien! darling Kao-pien!" murmured Sië, with a singular light in her eyes. "Kao-pien is also my favorite. Dear Ming-Y, let us chant his verses

together, to the melody of old — the music of those grand years when men were nobler and wiser than to-day."

And their voices rose through the perfumed night like the voices of the wonder-birds — of the Fung-hoang — blending together in liquid sweetness. Yet a moment, and Ming-Y, overcome by the witchery of his companion's voice, could only listen in speechless ecstasy, while the lights of the chamber swam dim before his sight, and tears of pleasure trickled down his cheeks.

So the ninth hour passed; and they continued to converse, and to drink the cool purple wine, and to sing the songs of the years of Thang, until far into the night. More than once Ming-Y thought of departing; but each time Sië would begin, in that silver-sweet voice of hers, so wondrous a story of the great poets of the past, and of the women whom they loved, that he became as one entranced; or she would sing for him a song so strange that all his senses seemed to die except that of hearing. And at last, as she paused to pledge him in a cup of wine, Ming-Y could not restrain himself from putting his arm about her round neck and drawing her dainty head closer to him, and kissing the lips that were so much ruddier and sweeter than the wine. Then their lips separated no more; — the night grew old, and they knew it not.

The birds awakened, the flowers opened their eyes

to the rising sun, and Ming-Y found himself at last compelled to bid his lovely enchantress farewell. Sië, accompanying him to the terrace, kissed him fondly and said: "Dear boy, come hither as often as you are able — as often as your heart whispers you to come. I know that you are not of those without faith and truth, who betray secrets; yet, being so young, you might also be sometimes thoughtless; and I pray you never to forget that only the stars have been the witnesses of our love. Speak of it to no living person, dearest; and take with you this little souvenir of our happy night."

And she presented him with an exquisite and curious little thing — a paper-weight in likeness of a couchant lion, wrought from a jade-stone yellow as that created by a rainbow in honor of Kong-fu-tze. Tenderly the boy kissed the gift and the beautiful hand that gave it. "May the Spirits punish me," he vowed, "if ever I knowingly give you cause to reproach me, sweetheart!" And they separated with mutual vows.

That morning, on returning to the house of Lord Tchang, Ming-Y told the first falsehood which had ever passed his lips. He averred that his mother had requested him thenceforward to pass his nights at home, now that the weather had become so pleasant; for, though the way was somewhat long, he was strong and active, and needed both air and healthy exercise. Tchang believed all Ming-Y said, and offered no objection. Accordingly the lad found him-

self enabled to pass all his evenings at the house of the beautiful Sië. Each night they devoted to the same pleasures which had made their first acquaintance so charming: they sang and conversed by turns; they played at chess — the learned game invented by Wu-Wang, which is an imitation of war; they composed pieces of eighty rhymes upon the flowers, the trees, the clouds, the streams, the birds, the bees. But in all accomplishments Sië far excelled her young sweetheart. Whenever they played at chess, it was always Ming-Y's general, Ming-Y's tsiang, who was surrounded and vanquished; when they composed verses, Sië's poems were ever superior to his in harmony of word-coloring, in elegance of form, in classic loftiness of thought. And the themes they selected were always the most difficult — those of the poets of the Thang dynasty; the songs they sang were also the songs of five hundred years before — the songs of Youen-tchin, of Thou-mou, of Kao-pien above all, high poet and ruler of the province of Sze-tchouen.

So the summer waxed and waned upon their love, and the luminous autumn came, with its vapors of phantom gold, its shadows of magical purple.

Then it unexpectedly happened that the father of Ming-Y, meeting his son's employer at Tching-tou, was asked by him: "Why must your boy continue to travel every evening to the city, now that the winter is approaching? The way is long, and when

he returns in the morning he looks fordone with weariness. Why not permit him to slumber in my house during the season of snow?"

And the father of Ming-Y, greatly astonished, responded: "Sir, my son has not visited the city, nor has he been to our house all this summer. I fear that he must have acquired wicked habits, and that he passes his nights in evil company — perhaps in gaming, or in drinking with the women of the flower-boats."

But the High Commissioner returned: "Nay! that is not to be thought of. I have never found any evil in the boy, and there are no taverns nor flower-boats nor any places of dissipation in our neighborhood. No doubt Ming-Y has found some amiable youth of his own age with whom to spend his evenings, and only told me an untruth for fear that I would not otherwise permit him to leave my residence. I beg that you will say nothing to him until I shall have sought to discover this mystery; and this very evening I shall send my servant to follow after him, and to watch whither he goes."

Pelou readily assented to this proposal, and promising to visit Tchang the following morning, returned to his home. In the evening, when Ming-Y left the house of Tchang, a servant followed him unobserved at a distance. But on reaching the most obscure portion of the road, the boy disappeared from sight as suddenly as though the earth had swallowed him. After having long sought after him in

vain, the domestic returned in great bewilderment to the house, and related what had taken place. Tchang immediately sent a messenger to Pelou.

In the mean time Ming-Y, entering the chamber of his beloved, was surprised and deeply pained to find her in tears. "Sweetheart," she sobbed, wreathing her arms around his neck, "we are about to be separated forever, because of reasons which I cannot tell you. From the very first I knew this must come to pass; and nevertheless it seemed to me for the moment so cruelly sudden a loss, so unexpected a misfortune, that I could not prevent myself from weeping! After this night we shall never see each other again, beloved, and I know that you will not be able to forget me while you live; but I know also that you will become a great scholar, and that honors and riches will be showered upon you, and that some beautiful and loving woman will console you for my loss. And now let us speak no more of grief; but let us pass this last evening joyously, so that your recollection of me may not be a painful one, and that you may remember my laughter rather than my tears."

She brushed the bright drops away, and brought wine and music and the melodious kin of seven silken strings, and would not suffer Ming-Y to speak for one moment of the coming separation. And she sang him an ancient song about the calmness of summer lakes reflecting the blue of heaven only, and the calmness of the heart also, before the clouds of care and of

grief and of weariness darken its little world. Soon they forgot their sorrow in the joy of song and wine; and those last hours seemed to Ming-Y more celestial than even the hours of their first bliss.

But when the yellow beauty of morning came their sadness returned, and they wept. Once more Sië accompanied her lover to the terrace steps; and as she kissed him farewell, she pressed into his hand a parting gift — a little brush-case of agate, wonderfully chiseled, and worthy the table of a great poet. And they separated forever, shedding many tears.

Still Ming-Y could not believe it was an eternal parting. "No!" he thought, "I shall visit her tomorrow; for I cannot now live without her, and I feel assured that she cannot refuse to receive me." Such were the thoughts that filled his mind as he reached the house of Tchang, to find his father and his patron standing on the porch awaiting him.

Ere he could speak a word, Pelou demanded: "Son, in what place have you been passing your nights?"

Seeing that his falsehood had been discovered, Ming-Y dared not make any reply, and remained abashed and silent, with bowed head, in the presence of his father. Then Pelou, striking the boy violently with his staff, commanded him to divulge the secret; and at last, partly through fear of his parent, and partly through fear of the law which ordains that "the son refusing to obey his father shall be punished

with one hundred blows of the bamboo," Ming-Y faltered out the history of his love.

Tchang changed color at the boy's tale. "Child," exclaimed the High Commissioner, "I have no relative of the name of Ping; I have never heard of the woman you describe; I have never heard even of the house which you speak of. But I know also that you cannot dare to lie to Pelou, your honored father; there is some strange delusion in all this affair."

Then Ming-Y produced the gifts that Sië had given him — the lion of yellow jade, the brush-case of carven agate, also some original compositions made by the beautiful lady herself. The astonishment of Tchang was now shared by Pelou. Both observed that the brush-case of agate and the lion of jade bore the appearance of objects that had lain buried in the earth for centuries, and were of a workmanship beyond the power of living man to imitate; while the compositions proved to be veritable master-pieces of poetry, written in the style of the poets of the dynasty of Thang.

"Friend Pelou," cried the High Commissioner, "let us immediately accompany the boy to the place where he obtained these miraculous things, and apply the testimony of our senses to this mystery. The boy is no doubt telling the truth; yet his story passes my understanding." And all three proceeded toward the place of the habitation of Sië.

But when they had arrived at the shadiest part of

the road, where the perfumes were most sweet and the mosses were greenest, and the fruits of the wild peach flushed most pinkly, Ming-Y, gazing through the groves, uttered a cry of dismay. Where the azure-tiled roof had risen against the sky, there was now only the blue emptiness of air; where the green-and-gold façade had been, there was visible only the flickering of leaves under the aureate autumn light; and where the broad terrace had extended, could be discerned only a ruin — a tomb so ancient, so deeply gnawed by moss, that the name graven upon it was no longer decipherable. The home of Sië had disappeared!

All suddenly the High Commissioner smote his forehead with his hand, and turning to Pelou, recited the well-known verse of the ancient poet Tching-Kou:

"Surely the peach-flowers blossom over the tomb of SIË-THAO."

"Friend Pelou," continued Tchang, "the beauty who bewitched your son was no other than she whose tomb stands there in ruin before us! Did she not say she was wedded to Ping-Khang? There is no family of that name, but Ping-Khang is indeed the name of a broad alley in the city near. There was a dark riddle in all she said. She called herself Sië of Moun-Hiao: there is no person of that name; there is no street of that name; but the Chinese characters 'Moun' and 'hiao,' placed together, form the character 'Kiao.' Listen! The alley Ping-Khang, situ-

ated in the street Kiao, was the place where dwelt the great courtesans of the dynasty of Thang! Did she not sing the songs of Kao-pien? And upon the brush-case and the paper-weight she gave your son, are there not characters which read, 'Pure object of art belonging to Kao, of the city of Pho-hai'? That city no longer exists; but the memory of Kao-pien remains, for he was governor of the province of Sze-tchouen, and a mighty poet. And when he dwelt in the land of Chou, was not his favorite the beautiful wanton Sië — Sië-Thao, unmatched for grace among all the women of her day? It was he who made her a gift of those manuscripts of song; it was he who gave her those objects of rare art. Sië-Thao died not as other women die. Her limbs may have crumbled to dust; yet something of her still lives in this deep wood — her Shadow still haunts this shadowy place."

Tchang ceased to speak. A vague fear fell upon the three. The thin mists of the morning made dim the distances of the green, and deepened the ghostly beauty of the woods. A faint breeze passed by, leaving a trail of blossom-scent — a last odor of dying flowers — thin as that which clings to the silk of a forgotten robe; and, as it passed, the trees seemed to whisper across the silence, "Sië-Thao."

Fearing greatly for his son, Pelou sent the lad away at once to the city of Kwang-tchau-fu. And there, in after years, Ming-Y obtained high dignities

and honors by reason of his talents and his learning; and he married the daughter of an illustrious house, by whom he became the father of sons and daughters famous for their virtues and their accomplishments. Never could he forget Sië-Thao; and yet it is said that he never spoke of her — not even when his children begged him to tell them the story of two beautiful objects that always lay upon his writing-table: a lion of yellow jade, and a brush-case of carven agate.

THE LEGEND OF TCHI-NIU

A sound of gongs, a sound of song — the song of the builders building the dwellings of the dead:

Khiû tchî yîng-yîng.
Toû tchî hoûng-hoûng.
Tchŏ tchî tông-tông.
Siŏ liú pîng-pîng.

In the quaint commentary accompanying the text of that holy book of Lao-tseu called "Kan-ing-p'ien" may be found a little story so old that the name of the one who first told it has been forgotten for a thousand years, yet so beautiful that it lives still in the memory of four hundred millions of people, like a prayer that, once learned, is forever remembered. The Chinese writer makes no mention of any city nor of any province, although even in the relation of the most ancient traditions such an omission is rare; we are only told that the name of the hero of the legend was Tong-yong, and that he lived in the years of the great dynasty of Han, some twenty centuries ago.

Tong-yong's mother had died while he was yet an infant; and when he became a youth of nineteen years his father also passed away, leaving him utterly alone in the world, and without resources of any sort; for, being a very poor man, Tong's father had put himself to great straits to educate the lad, and had

not been able to lay by even one copper coin of his earnings. And Tong lamented greatly to find himself so destitute that he could not honor the memory of that good father by having the customary rites of burial performed, and a carven tomb erected upon a propitious site. The poor only are friends of the poor; and among all those whom Tong knew, there was no one able to assist him in defraying the expenses of the funeral. In one way only could the youth obtain money — by selling himself as a slave to some rich cultivator; and this he at last decided to do. In vain his friends did their utmost to dissuade him; and to no purpose did they attempt to delay the accomplishment of his sacrifice by beguiling promises of future aid. Tong only replied that he would sell his freedom a hundred times, if it were possible, rather than suffer his father's memory to remain unhonored even for a brief season. And furthermore, confiding in his youth and strength, he determined to put a high price upon his servitude — a price which would enable him to build a handsome tomb, but which it would be well-nigh impossible for him ever to repay.

Accordingly he repaired to the broad public place where slaves and debtors were exposed for sale, and seated himself upon a bench of stone, having affixed to his shoulders a placard inscribed with the terms of his servitude and the list of his qualifications as a laborer. Many who read the characters upon the

placard smiled disdainfully at the price asked, and passed on without a word; others lingered only to question him out of simple curiosity; some commended him with hollow praise; some openly mocked his unselfishness, and laughed at his childish piety. Thus many hours wearily passed, and Tong had almost despaired of finding a master, when there rode up a high official of the province — a grave and handsome man, lord of a thousand slaves, and owner of vast estates. Reining in his Tartar horse, the official halted to read the placard and to consider the value of the slave. He did not smile, or advise, or ask any questions; but having observed the price asked, and the fine strong limbs of the youth, purchased him without further ado, merely ordering his attendant to pay the sum and to see that the necessary papers were made out.

Thus Tong found himself enabled to fulfill the wish of his heart, and to have a monument built which, although of small size, was destined to delight the eyes of all who beheld it, being designed by cunning artists and executed by skillful sculptors. And while it was yet designed only, the pious rites were performed, the silver coin was placed in the mouth of the dead, the white lanterns were hung at the door, the holy prayers were recited, and paper shapes of all things the departed might need in the land of the Genii were consumed in consecrated fire. And after the geomancers and the necroman-

cers had chosen a burial-spot which no unlucky star could shine upon, a place of rest which no demon or dragon might ever disturb, the beautiful chih was built. Then was the phantom money strewn along the way; the funeral procession departed from the dwelling of the dead, and with prayers and lamentation the mortal remains of Tong's good father were borne to the tomb.

Then Tong entered as a slave into the service of his purchaser, who allotted him a little hut to dwell in; and thither Tong carried with him those wooden tablets, bearing the ancestral names, before which filial piety must daily burn the incense of prayer, and perform the tender duties of family worship.

Thrice had spring perfumed the breast of the land with flowers, and thrice had been celebrated that festival of the dead which is called "Siu-fan-ti," and thrice had Tong swept and garnished his father's tomb and presented his fivefold offering of fruits and meats. The period of mourning had passed, yet he had not ceased to mourn for his parent. The years revolved with their moons, bringing him no hour of joy, no day of happy rest; yet he never lamented his servitude, or failed to perform the rites of ancestral worship — until at last the fever of the rice-fields laid strong hold upon him, and he could not arise from his couch; and his fellow-laborers thought him destined to die. There was no one to

wait upon him, no one to care for his needs, inasmuch as slaves and servants were wholly busied with the duties of the household or the labor of the fields — all departing to toil at sunrise and returning weary only after the sundown.

Now, while the sick youth slumbered the fitful slumber of exhaustion one sultry noon, he dreamed that a strange and beautiful woman stood by him, and bent above him and touched his forehead with the long, fine fingers of her shapely hand. And at her cool touch a weird sweet shock passed through him, and all his veins tingled as if thrilled by new life. Opening his eyes in wonder, he saw verily bending over him the charming being of whom he had dreamed, and he knew that her lithe hand really caressed his throbbing forehead. But the flame of the fever was gone, a delicious coolness now penetrated every fibre of his body, and the thrill of which he had dreamed still tingled in his blood like a great joy. Even at the same moment the eyes of the gentle visitor met his own, and he saw they were singularly beautiful, and shone like splendid black jewels under brows curved like the wings of the swallow. Yet their calm gaze seemed to pass through him as light through crystal; and a vague awe came upon him, so that the question which had risen to his lips found no utterance. Then she, still caressing him, smiled and said: "I have come to restore thy strength and to be thy wife. Arise and worship with me."

Her clear voice had tones melodious as a bird's

song; but in her gaze there was an imperious power which Tong felt he dare not resist. Rising from his couch, he was astounded to find his strength wholly restored; but the cool, slender hand which held his own led him away so swiftly that he had little time for amazement. He would have given years of existence for courage to speak of his misery, to declare his utter inability to maintain a wife; but something irresistible in the long dark eyes of his companion forbade him to speak; and as though his inmost thought had been discerned by that wondrous gaze, she said to him, in the same clear voice, "I will provide." Then shame made him blush at the thought of his wretched aspect and tattered apparel; but he observed that she also was poorly attired, like a woman of the people — wearing no ornament of any sort, nor even shoes upon her feet. And before he had yet spoken to her, they came before the ancestral tablets; and there she knelt with him and prayed, and pledged him in a cup of wine — brought he knew not from whence — and together they worshiped Heaven and Earth. Thus she became his wife.

A mysterious marriage it seemed, for neither on that day nor at any future time could Tong venture to ask his wife the name of her family, or of the place whence she came, and he could not answer any of the curious questions which his fellow-laborers put to him concerning her; and she, moreover, never

uttered a word about herself, except to say that her name was Tchi. But although Tong had such awe of her that while her eyes were upon him he was as one having no will of his own, he loved her unspeakably; and the thought of his serfdom ceased to weigh upon him from the hour of his marriage. As through magic the little dwelling had become transformed: its misery was masked with charming paper devices — with dainty decorations created out of nothing by that pretty jugglery of which woman only knows the secret.

Each morning at dawn the young husband found a well-prepared and ample repast awaiting him, and each evening also upon his return; but the wife all day sat at her loom, weaving silk after a fashion unlike anything which had ever been seen before in that province. For as she wove, the silk flowed from the loom like a slow current of glossy gold, bearing upon its undulations strange forms of violet and crimson and jewel-green: shapes of ghostly horsemen riding upon horses, and of phantom chariots dragon-drawn, and of standards of trailing cloud. In every dragon's beard glimmered the mystic pearl; in every rider's helmet sparkled the gem of rank. And each day Tchi would weave a great piece of such figured silk; and the fame of her weaving spread abroad. From far and near people thronged to see the marvelous work; and the silk-merchants of great cities heard of it, and they sent messengers to Tchi, asking her that she should weave for them and teach

them her secret. Then she wove for them, as they desired, in return for the silver cubes which they brought her; but when they prayed her to teach them, she laughed and said, "Assuredly I could never teach you, for no one among you has fingers like mine." And indeed no man could discern her fingers when she wove, any more than he might behold the wings of a bee vibrating in swift flight.

The seasons passed, and Tong never knew want, so well did his beautiful wife fulfill her promise — "I will provide"; and the cubes of bright silver brought by the silk-merchants were piled up higher and higher in the great carven chest which Tchi had bought for the storage of the household goods.

One morning, at last, when Tong, having finished his repast, was about to depart to the fields, Tchi unexpectedly bade him remain; and opening the great chest, she took out of it and gave him a document written in the official characters called "li-shu." And Tong, looking at it, cried out and leaped in his joy, for it was the certificate of his manumission. Tchi had secretly purchased her husband's freedom with the price of her wondrous silks!

"Thou shalt labor no more for any master," she said, "but for thine own sake only. And I have also bought this dwelling, with all which is therein, and the tea-fields to the south, and the mulberry groves hard by — all of which are thine."

Then Tong, beside himself for gratefulness, would

have prostrated himself in worship before her, but that she would not suffer it.

Thus he was made free; and prosperity came to him with his freedom; and whatsoever he gave to the sacred earth was returned to him centupled; and his servants loved him and blessed the beautiful Tchi, so silent and yet so kindly to all about her. But the silk-loom soon remained untouched, for Tchi gave birth to a son — a boy so beautiful that Tong wept with delight when he looked upon him. And thereafter the wife devoted herself wholly to the care of the child.

Now it soon became manifest that the boy was not less wonderful than his wonderful mother. In the third month of his age he could speak; in the seventh month he could repeat by heart the proverbs of the sages, and recite the holy prayers; before the eleventh month he could use the writing-brush with skill, and copy in shapely characters the precepts of Lao-tseu. And the priests of the temples came to behold him and to converse with him, and they marveled at the charm of the child and the wisdom of what he said; and they blessed Tong, saying: "Surely this son of thine is a gift from the Master of Heaven, a sign that the immortals love thee. May thine eyes behold a hundred happy summers!"

It was in the Period of the Eleventh Moon: the flowers had passed away, the perfume of the summer

had flown, the winds were growing chill, and in Tong's home the evening fires were lighted. Long the husband and wife sat in the mellow glow — he speaking much of his hopes and joys, and of his son that was to be so grand a man, and of many paternal projects; while she, speaking little, listened to his words, and often turned her wonderful eyes upon him with an answering smile. Never had she seemed so beautiful before; and Tong, watching her face, marked not how the night waned, nor how the fire sank low, nor how the wind sang in the leafless trees without.

All suddenly Tchi arose without speaking, and took his hand in hers and led him, gently as on that strange wedding-morning, to the cradle where their boy slumbered, faintly smiling in his dreams. And in that moment there came upon Tong the same strange fear that he knew when Tchi's eyes had first met his own — the vague fear that love and trust had calmed, but never wholly cast out, like unto the fear of the gods. And all unknowingly, like one yielding to the pressure of mighty invisible hands, he bowed himself low before her, kneeling as to a divinity. Now, when he lifted his eyes again to her face, he closed them forthwith in awe; for she towered before him taller than any mortal woman, and there was a glow about her as of sunbeams, and the light of her limbs shone through her garments. But her sweet voice came to him with all the tenderness of other hours, saying:

"Lo! my beloved, the moment has come in which I must forsake thee; for I was never of mortal born, and the Invisible may incarnate themselves for a time only. Yet I leave with thee the pledge of our love — this fair son, who shall ever be to thee as faithful and as fond as thou thyself hast been. Know, my beloved, that I was sent to thee even by the Master of Heaven, in reward of thy filial piety, and that I must now return to the glory of His house: I AM THE GODDESS TCHI-NIU."

Even as she ceased to speak, the great glow faded; and Tong, reopening his eyes, knew that she had passed away forever — mysteriously as pass the winds of heaven, irrevocably as the light of a flame blown out. Yet all the doors were barred, all the windows unopened. Still the child slept, smiling in his sleep. Outside, the darkness was breaking; the sky was brightening swiftly; the night was past. With splendid majesty the East threw open high gates of gold for the coming of the sun; and, illuminated by the glory of his coming, the vapors of morning wrought themselves into marvelous shapes of shifting color — into forms weirdly beautiful as the silken dreams woven in the loom of Tchi-Niu.

THE RETURN OF YEN-TCHIN-KING

Before me ran, as a herald runneth, the Leader of the Moon;
And the Spirit of the Wind followed after me — quickening his flight.
LI-SAO

IN the thirty-eighth chapter of the holy book, "Kan-ing-p'ien," wherein the Recompense of Immortality is considered, may be found the legend of Yen-Tchin-King. A thousand years have passed since the passing of the good Tchin-King; for it was in the period of the greatness of Thang that he lived and died.

Now, in those days when Yen-Tchin-King was Supreme Judge of one of the Six August Tribunals one Li-hi-lié, a soldier mighty for evil, lifted the black banner of revolt, and drew after him, as a tide of destruction, the millions of the northern provinces. And learning of these things, and knowing also that Hi-lié was the most ferocious of men, who respected nothing on earth save fearlessness, the Son of Heaven commanded Tchin-King that he should visit Hi-lié and strive to recall the rebel to duty, and read unto the people who followed after him in revolt the Emperor's letter of reproof and warning. For Tchin-King was famed throughout the provinces for his wisdom, his rectitude, and his fearlessness; and the Son of Heaven believed that if Hi-lié would listen to the words of any living man steadfast in loyalty

and virtue, he would listen to the words of Tchin-King. So Tchin-King arrayed himself in his robes of office, and set his house in order; and, having embraced his wife and his children, mounted his horse and rode away alone to the roaring camp of the rebels, bearing the Emperor's letter in his bosom. "I shall return; fear not!" were his last words to the gray servant who watched him from the terrace as he rode.

And Tchin-King at last descended from his horse, and entered into the rebel camp, and, passing through that huge gathering of war, stood in the presence of Hi-lié. High sat the rebel among his chiefs, encircled by the wave-lightning of swords and the thunders of ten thousand gongs: above him undulated the silken folds of the Black Dragon, while a vast fire rose bickering before him. Also Tchin-King saw that the tongues of that fire were licking human bones, and that skulls of men lay blackening among the ashes. Yet he was not afraid to look upon the fire, nor into the eyes of Hi-lié; but drawing from his bosom the roll of perfumed yellow silk upon which the words of the Emperor were written, and kissing it, he made ready to read, while the multitude became silent. Then, in a strong, clear voice he began:

The words of the Celestial and August, the Son of Heaven, the Divine Ko-Tsu-Tchin-Yao-ti, unto the rebel Li-hi-lié and those that follow him.

And a roar went up like the roar of the sea — a roar of rage, and the hideous battle-moan, like the moan of a forest in storm — "Hoo! hoo-oo-oo-oo!" — and the sword-lightnings brake loose, and the thunder of the gongs moved the ground beneath the messenger's feet. But Hi-lié waved his gilded wand, and again there was silence. "Nay!" spake the rebel chief; "let the dog bark!" So Tchin-King spake on:

Knowest thou not, O most rash and foolish of men, that thou leadest the people only into the mouth of the Dragon of Destruction? Knowest thou not, also, that the people of my kingdom are the first-born of the Master of Heaven? So it hath been written that he who doth needlessly subject the people to wounds and death shall not be suffered by Heaven to live! Thou who wouldst subvert those laws founded by the wise — those laws in obedience to which may happiness and prosperity alone be found — thou art committing the greatest of all crimes — the crime that is never forgiven!

O my people, think not that I your Emperor, I your Father, seek your destruction. I desire only your happiness, your prosperity, your greatness; let not your folly provoke the severity of your Celestial Parent. Follow not after madness and blind rage; hearken rather to the wise words of my messenger.

"Hoo! hoo-oo-oo-oo-oo!" roared the people, gathering fury. "Hoo! hoo-oo-oo-oo!" — till the mountains rolled back the cry like the rolling of a typhoon; and once more the pealing of the gongs paralyzed voice and hearing.

Then Tchin-King, looking at Hi-lié, saw that he laughed, and that the words of the letter would not

again be listened to. Therefore he read on to the end without looking about him, resolved to perform his mission in so far as lay in his power. And having read all, he would have given the letter to Hi-lié; but Hi-lié would not extend his hand to take it. Therefore Tchin-King replaced it in his bosom, and folding his arms, looked Hi-lié calmly in the face, and waited.

Again Hi-lié waved his gilded wand; and the roaring ceased, and the booming of the gongs, until nothing save the fluttering of the Dragon banner could be heard. Then spake Hi-lié, with an evil smile:

"Tchin-King, O son of a dog! if thou dost not now take the oath of fealty, and bow thyself before me, and salute me with the salutation of Emperors — even with the luh-kao, the triple prostration — into that fire thou shalt be thrown."

But Tchin-King, turning his back upon the usurper, bowed himself a moment in worship to Heaven and Earth; and then rising suddenly, ere any man could lay hand upon him, he leaped into the towering flame, and stood there, with folded arms, like a God.

Then Hi-lié leaped to his feet in amazement, and shouted to his men; and they snatched Tchin-King from the fire, and wrung the flames from his robes with their naked hands, and extolled him, and praised him to his face. And even Hi-lié himself descended from his seat, and spoke fair words to him, saying:

"O Tchin-King, I see thou art indeed a brave man and true, and worthy of all honor; be seated among us, I pray thee, and partake of whatever it is in our power to bestow!"

But Tchin-King, looking upon him unswervingly, replied in a voice clear as the voice of a great bell:

"Never, O Hi-lié, shall I accept aught from thy hand, save death, so long as thou shalt continue in the path of wrath and folly. And never shall it be said that Tchin-King sat him down among rebels and traitors, among murderers and robbers."

Then Hi-lié, in sudden fury, smote him with his sword; and Tchin-King fell to the earth and died, striving even in his death to bow his head toward the South — toward the place of the Emperor's palace — toward the presence of his beloved Master.

Even at the same hour the Son of Heaven, alone in the inner chamber of his palace, became aware of a Shape prostrate before his feet; and when he spake, the Shape arose and stood before him, and he saw that it was Tchin-King. And the Emperor would have questioned him; yet ere he could question, the familiar voice spake, saying:

"Son of Heaven, the mission confided to me I have performed; and thy command hath been accomplished to the extent of thy humble servant's feeble power. But even now must I depart, that I may enter the service of another Master."

And looking, the Emperor perceived that the

Golden Tigers upon the wall were visible through the form of Tchin-King; and a strange coldness, like a winter wind, passed through the chamber; and the figure faded out. Then the Emperor knew that the Master of whom his faithful servant had spoken was none other than the Master of Heaven.

Also at the same hour the gray servant of Tchin-King's house beheld him passing through the apartments, smiling as he was wont to smile when he saw that all things were as he desired.

"Is it well with thee, my lord?" questioned the aged man.

And a voice answered him: "It is well"; but the presence of Tchin-King had passed away before the answer came.

So the armies of the Son of Heaven strove with the rebels. But the land was soaked with blood and blackened with fire; and the corpses of whole populations were carried by the rivers to feed the fishes of the sea; and still the war prevailed through many a long red year. Then came to aid the Son of Heaven the hordes that dwell in the desolations of the West and North — horsemen born, a nation of wild archers, each mighty to bend a two-hundred-pound bow until the ears should meet. And as a whirlwind they came against rebellion, raining raven-feathered arrows in a storm of death; and they prevailed against Hi-lié and his people. Then those that survived destruction and defeat submitted, and prom-

ised allegiance; and once more was the law of righteousness restored. But Tchin-King had been dead for many summers.

And the Son of Heaven sent word to his victorious generals that they should bring back with them the bones of his faithful servant, to be laid with honor in a mausoleum erected by imperial decree. So the generals of the Celestial and August sought after the nameless grave and found it, and had the earth taken up, and made ready to remove the coffin.

But the coffin crumbled into dust before their eyes; for the worms had gnawed it, and the hungry earth had devoured its substance, leaving only a phantom shell that vanished at touch of the light. And lo! as it vanished, all beheld lying there the perfect form and features of the good Tchin-King. Corruption had not touched him, nor had the worms disturbed his rest, nor had the bloom of life departed from his face. And he seemed to dream only — comely to see as upon the morning of his bridal, and smiling as the holy images smile, with eyelids closed, in the twilight of the great pagodas.

Then spoke a priest, standing by the grave: "O my children, this is indeed a Sign from the Master of Heaven; in such wise do the Powers Celestial preserve them that are chosen to be numbered with the Immortals. Death may not prevail over them, neither may corruption come nigh them. Verily the blessed Tchin-King hath taken his place among the divinities of Heaven!"

Then they bore Tchin-King back to his native place, and laid him with highest honors in the mausoleum which the Emperor had commanded; and there he sleeps, incorruptible forever, arrayed in his robes of state. Upon his tomb are sculptured the emblems of his greatness and his wisdom and his virtue, and the signs of his office, and the Four Precious Things: and the monsters which are holy symbols mount giant guard in stone about it; and the weird Dogs of Fo keep watch before it, as before the temples of the gods.

Sang a Chinese heart fourteen hundred years ago:

There is Somebody of whom I am thinking.
Far away there is Somebody of whom I am thinking.
A hundred leagues of mountains lie between us:
Yet the same Moon shines upon us, and the passing Wind breathes upon us both.

"Good is the continence of the eye;
Good is the continence of the ear;
Good is the continence of the nostrils;
Good is the continence of the tongue;
Good is the continence of the body;
Good is the continence of speech;
Good is all. . . ."

AGAIN the Vulture of Temptation soared to the highest heaven of his contemplation, bringing his soul down, down, reeling and fluttering, back to the World of Illusion. Again the memory made dizzy his thought, like the perfume of some venomous flower. Yet he had seen the bayadère for an instant only, when passing through Kasí upon his way to China — to the vast empire of souls that thirsted after the refreshment of Buddha's law, as sun-parched fields thirst for the life-giving rain. When she called him, and dropped her little gift into his mendicant's bowl, he had indeed lifted his fan before his face, yet not quickly enough; and the penalty of that fault had followed him a thousand leagues — pursued after him even into the strange land to which he had come to bear the words of the Universal Teacher. Accursed beauty! surely framed by the

Tempter of tempters, by Mara himself, for the perdition of the just! Wisely had Bhagavat warned his disciples:

O ye Çramanas, women are not to be looked upon, And if ye chance to meet women, ye must not suffer your eyes to dwell upon them; but, maintaining holy reserve, speak not to them at all. Then fail not to whisper unto your own hearts, "Lo, we are Çramanas, whose duty it is to remain uncontaminated by the corruptions of this world, even as the Lotus, which suffereth no vileness to cling unto its leaves, though it blossom amid the refuse of the wayside ditch."

Then also came to his memory, but with a new and terrible meaning, the words of the Twentieth-and-Third of the Admonitions:

Of all attachments unto objects of desire, the strongest indeed is the attachment to form. Happily, this passion is unique; for were there any other like unto it, then to enter the Perfect Way were impossible.

How, indeed, thus haunted by the illusion of form, was he to fulfill the vow that he had made to pass a night and a day in perfect and unbroken meditation? Already the night was beginning! Assuredly, for sickness of the soul, for fever of the spirit, there was no physic save prayer. The sunset was swiftly fading out. He strove to pray:

O the Jewel in the Lotus!

Even as the tortoise withdraweth its extremities into its shell, let me, O Blessed One, withdraw my senses wholly into meditation!

O the Jewel in the Lotus!

For even as rain penetrateth the broken roof of a

dwelling long uninhabited, so may passion enter the soul uninhabited by meditation.

O the Jewel in the Lotus!

Even as still water that hath deposited all its slime, so let my soul, O Tathâgata, be made pure! Give me strong power to rise above the world, O Master, even as the wild bird rises from its marsh to follow the pathway of the Sun!

O the Jewel in the Lotus!

By day shineth the sun, by night shineth the moon; shineth also the warrior in harness of war; shineth likewise in meditations the Çramana. But the Buddha at all times, by night or by day, shineth ever the same, illuminating the world.

O the Jewel in the Lotus!

Let me cease, O thou Perfectly Awakened, to remain as an Ape in the World-Forest, forever ascending and descending in search of the fruits of folly. Swift as the twining of serpents, vast as the growth of lianas in a forest, are the all-encircling growths of the Plant of Desire.

O the Jewel in the Lotus!

Vain his prayer, alas! Vain also his invocation! The mystic meaning of the holy text — the sense of the Lotus, the sense of the Jewel — had evaporated from the words, and their monotonous utterance now served only to lend more dangerous definition to the memory that tempted and tortured him. *O the jewel in her ear!* What lotus-bud more dainty than the folded flower of flesh, with its dripping of diamond-fire! Again he saw it, and the curve of the cheek beyond, luscious to look upon as beautiful brown fruit. How true the Two Hundred and Eighty-Fourth verse of the Admonitions!

So long as a man shall not have torn from his heart even the smallest rootlet of that liana of desire which draweth his thought toward women, even so long shall his soul remain fettered.

And there came to his mind also the Three Hundred and Forty-Fifth verse of the same blessed book, regarding fetters:

In bonds of rope, wise teachers have said, there is no strength; nor in fetters of wood, nor yet in fetters of iron. Much stronger than any of these is the fetter of *concern for the jewelled earrings of women.*

"Omniscient Gotama!" he cried — "all-seeing Tathâgata! How multiform the consolation of Thy Word! How marvelous Thy understanding of the human heart! Was this also one of Thy temptations? — one of the myriad illusions marshaled before Thee by Mara in that night when the earth rocked as a chariot, and the sacred trembling passed from sun to sun, from system to system, from universe to universe, from eternity to eternity?"

O the jewel in her ear! The vision would not go! Nay, each time it hovered before his thought it seemed to take a warmer life, a fonder look, a fairer form; to develop with his weakness; to gain force from his enervation. He saw the eyes, large, limpid, soft, and black as a deer's; the pearls in the dark hair, and the pearls in the pink mouth; the lips curling to a kiss, a flower-kiss; and a fragrance seemed to float to his senses, sweet, strange, soporific — a perfume of youth, an odor of woman. Rising to his

feet, with strong resolve he pronounced again the sacred invocation; and he recited the holy words of the "Chapter of Impermanency":

> Gazing upon the heavens and upon the earth ye must say, *These are not permanent.* Gazing upon the mountains and the rivers, ye must say, *These are not permanent.* Gazing upon the forms and upon the faces of exterior beings, and beholding their growth and their development, ye must say, *These are not permanent.*

And, nevertheless, how sweet illusion! The illusion of the great sun; the illusion of the shadow-casting hills; the illusion of waters, formless and multiform; the illusion of — Nay, nay! what impious fancy! Accursed girl! yet, yet! — why should he curse her? Had she ever done aught to merit the malediction of an ascetic? Never, never! Only her form, the memory of her, the beautiful phantom of her, the accursed phantom of her! What was she? An illusion creating illusions, a mockery, a dream, a shadow, a vanity, a vexation of spirit! The fault, the sin, was in himself, in his rebellious thought, in his untamed memory. Though mobile as water, intangible as vapor, Thought, nevertheless, may be tamed by the Will, may be harnessed to the chariot of Wisdom — must be! — that happiness be found. And he recited the blessed verses of the "Book of the Way of the Law":

> *All forms are only temporary.* When this great truth is fully comprehended by any one, then is he delivered from all pain. This is the Way of Purification.

All forms are subject unto pain. When this great truth is fully comprehended by any one, then is he delivered from all pain. This is the Way of Purification.

All forms are without substantial reality. When this great truth is fully comprehended by any one, then is he delivered from all pain. This is the way of . . .

Her form, too, unsubstantial, unreal, an illusion only, though comeliest of illusions? She had given him alms! Was the merit of the giver illusive also — illusive like the grace of the supple fingers that gave? Assuredly there were mysteries in the Abhidharma impenetrable, incomprehensible! . . . It was a golden coin, stamped with the symbol of an elephant — not more of an illusion, indeed, than the gifts of Kings to the Buddha! Gold upon her bosom also, less fine than the gold of her skin. Naked between the silken sash and the narrow breast-corselet, her young waist curved glossy and pliant as a bow. Richer the silver in her voice than in the hollow pagals that made a moonlight about her ankles! But her smile! — the little teeth like flower-stamens in the perfumed blossom of her mouth!

O weakness! O shame! How had the strong Charioteer of Resolve thus lost his control over the wild team of fancy! Was this languor of the Will a signal of coming peril, the peril of slumber? So strangely vivid those fancies were, so brightly definite, as about to take visible form, to move with factitious life, to play some unholy drama upon the

stage of dreams! "O Thou Fully Awakened!" he cried aloud, "help now thy humble disciple to obtain the blessed wakefulness of perfect contemplation! let him find force to fulfill his vow! suffer not Mara to prevail against him!" And he recited the eternal verses of the "Chapter of Wakefulness":

Completely and eternally awake are the disciples of Gotama! Unceasingly, by day and night, their thoughts are fixed upon the Law.

Completely and eternally awake are the disciples of Gotama! Unceasingly, by day and night, their thoughts are fixed upon the Community.

Completely and eternally awake are the disciples of Gotama! Unceasingly, by day and night, their thoughts are fixed upon the Body.

Completely and eternally awake are the disciples of Gotama! Unceasingly, by day and night, their minds know the sweetness of perfect peace.

Completely and eternally awake are the disciples of Gotama! Unceasingly, by day and night, their minds enjoy the deep peace of meditation.

There came a murmur to his ears; a murmuring of many voices, smothering the utterances of his own, like a tumult of waters. The stars went out before his sight; the heavens darkened their infinities: all things became viewless, became blackness; and the great murmur deepened, like the murmur of a rising tide; and the earth seemed to sink from beneath him. His feet no longer touched the ground; a sense of supernatural buoyancy pervaded every fibre of his body: he felt himself floating in obscurity; then sinking softly, slowly, like a feather

dropped from the pinnacle of a temple. Was this death? Nay, for all suddenly, as transported by the Sixth Supernatural Power, he stood again in light — a perfumed, sleepy light, vapory, beautiful — that bathed the marvelous streets of some Indian city. Now the nature of the murmur became manifest to him; for he moved with a mighty throng, a people of pilgrims, a nation of worshipers. But these were not of his faith; they bore upon their foreheads the smeared symbols of obscene gods! Still, he could not escape from their midst; the mile-broad human torrent bore him irresistibly with it, as a leaf is swept by the waters of the Ganges. Rajahs were there with their trains, and princes riding upon elephants, and Brahmins robed in their vestments, and swarms of voluptuous dancing-girls, moving to chant of kabit and damâri. But whither, whither? Out of the city into the sun they passed, between avenues of banyan, down colonnades of palm. But whither, whither?

Blue-distant, a mountain of carven stone appeared before them — the Temple, lifting to heaven its wilderness of chiseled pinnacles, flinging to the sky the golden spray of its decoration. Higher it grew with approach, the blue tones changed to gray, the outlines sharpened in the light. Then each detail became visible: the elephants of the pedestals standing upon tortoises of rock; the great grim faces of the capitals; the serpents and monsters writhing among the friezes; the many-headed gods of basalt in their

galleries of fretted niches, tier above tier; the pictured foulnesses, the painted lusts, the divinities of abomination. And, yawning in the sloping precipice of sculpture, beneath a frenzied swarming of gods and Gopia — a beetling pyramid of limbs and bodies interlocked — the Gate, cavernous and shadowy as the mouth of Siva, devoured the living multitude.

The eddy of the throng whirled him with it to the vastness of the interior. None seemed to note his yellow robe, none even to observe his presence. Giant aisles intercrossed their heights above him; myriads of mighty pillars, fantastically carven, filed away to invisibility behind the yellow illumination of torch-fires. Strange images, weirdly sensuous, loomed up through haze of incense. Colossal figures, that at a distance assumed the form of elephants or garuda-birds, changed aspect when approached, and revealed as the secret of their design an interplaiting of the bodies of women; while one divinity rode all the monstrous allegories — one divinity or demon, eternally the same in the repetition of the sculptor, universally visible as though self-multiplied. The huge pillars themselves were symbols, figures, carnalities; the orgiastic spirit of that worship lived and writhed in the contorted bronze of the lamps, the twisted gold of the cups, the chiseled marble of the tanks. . . .

How far had he proceeded? He knew not; the journey among those countless columns, past those armies of petrified gods, down lanes of flickering

lights, seemed longer than the voyage of a caravan, longer than his pilgrimage to China! But suddenly, inexplicably, there came a silence as of cemeteries; the living ocean seemed to have ebbed away from about him, to have been engulfed within abysses of subterranean architecture! He found himself alone in some strange crypt before a basin, shell-shaped and shallow, bearing in its centre a rounded column of less than human height, whose smooth and spherical summit was wreathed with flowers. Lamps similarly formed, and fed with oil of palm, hung above it. There was no other graven image, no visible divinity. Flowers of countless varieties lay heaped upon the pavement; they covered its surface like a carpet, thick, soft; they exhaled their ghosts beneath his feet. The perfume seemed to penetrate his brain — a perfume sensuous, intoxicating, unholy; an unconquerable languor mastered his will, and he sank to rest upon the floral offerings.

The sound of a tread, light as a whisper, approached through the heavy stillness, with a drowsy tinkling of pagals, a tintinnabulation of anklets. All suddenly he felt glide about his neck the tepid smoothness of a woman's arm. *She, she!* his Illusion, his Temptation; but how transformed, transfigured! — preternatural in her loveliness, incomprehensible in her charm! Delicate as a jasmine-petal the cheek that touched his own; deep as night, sweet as summer, the eyes that watched him.

"Heart's-thief," her flower-lips whispered —

"heart's-thief, how have I sought for thee! How have I found thee! Sweets I bring thee, my beloved; lips and bosom; fruit and blossom. Hast thirst? Drink from the well of mine eyes! Wouldst sacrifice? I am thine altar! Wouldst pray? I am thy God!"

Their lips touched; her kiss seemed to change the cells of his blood to flame. For a moment Illusion triumphed; Mara prevailed! . . . With a shock of resolve the dreamer awoke in the night — under the stars of the Chinese sky.

Only a mockery of sleep! But the vow had been violated, the sacred purpose unfulfilled! Humiliated, penitent, but resolved, the ascetic drew from his girdle a keen knife, and with unfaltering hands severed his eyelids from his eyes, and flung them from him.

"O Thou Perfectly Awakened!" he prayed, "thy disciple hath not been overcome save through the feebleness of the body; and his vow hath been renewed. Here shall he linger, without food or drink, until the moment of its fulfillment."

And having assumed the hieratic posture — seated himself with his lower limbs folded beneath him, and the palms of his hands upward, the right upon the left, the left resting upon the sole of his upturned foot — he resumed his meditation.

Dawn blushed; day brightened. The sun shortened all the shadows of the land, and lengthened

them again, and sank at last upon his funeral pyre of crimson-burning cloud. Night came and glittered and passed. But Mara had tempted in vain. This time the vow had been fulfilled, the holy purpose accomplished.

And again the sun arose to fill the world with laughter of light; flowers opened their hearts to him; birds sang their morning hymn of fire worship; the deep forest trembled with delight; and far upon the plain, the eaves of many-storied temples and the peaked caps of the city-towers caught aureate glory. Strong in the holiness of his accomplished vow, the Indian pilgrim arose in the morning glow. He started for amazement as he lifted his hands to his eyes. What! was everything a dream? Impossible! Yet now his eyes felt no pain; neither were they lidless; not even so much as one of their lashes was lacking. What marvel had been wrought? In vain he looked for the severed lids that he had flung upon the ground; they had mysteriously vanished. But lo! there where he had cast them two wondrous shrubs were growing, with dainty leaflets eyelid-shaped, and snowy buds just opening to the East.

Then, by virtue of the supernatural power acquired in that mighty mediation, it was given the holy missionary to know the secret of that newly created plant — the subtle virtue of its leaves. And he named it, in the language of the nation to whom he brought the Lotus of the Good Law, "TE"; and he spake to it, saying:

THE TRADITION OF THE TEA-PLANT

"Blessed be thou, sweet plant, beneficent, life-giving, formed by the spirit of virtuous resolve! Lo! the fame of thee shall yet spread unto the ends of the earth; and the perfume of thy life be borne unto the uttermost parts by all the winds of heaven! Verily, for all time to come men who drink of thy sap shall find such refreshment that weariness may not overcome them nor languor seize upon them; — neither shall they know the confusion of drowsiness, nor any desire for slumber in the hour of duty or of prayer. Blessed be thou!"

And still, as a mist of incense, as a smoke of universal sacrifice, perpetually ascends to heaven from all the lands of earth the pleasant vapor of Te, created for the refreshment of mankind by the power of a holy vow, the virtue of a pious atonement.

THE TALE OF THE PORCELAIN-G(

It is written in the "Fong-ho-chin-tch'ouen," that whenever tist Thsang-Kong was in doubt, he would look into the fire of t oven in which his vases were baking, and question the Guardia dwelling in the flame. And the Spirit of the Oven-fires so aided h his counsels, that the porcelains made by Thsang-Kong were finer and lovelier to look upon than all other porcelains. And th baked in the years of Khang-hí — sacredly called "Jin Houang

WHO first of men discovered the secret of the ling, of the Pe-tun-tse — the bones and the fles skeleton and the skin, of the beauteous Vase? first discovered the virtue of the curd-white Who first prepared the ice-pure bricks of tur gathered-hoariness of mountains that have di age; blanched dust of the rocky bones and the flesh of sun-seeking Giants that have ceased t Unto whom was it first given to discover the c art of porcelain?

Unto Pu, once a man, now a god, before v snowy statues bow the myriad populations en in the guilds of the potteries. But the place c birth we know not; perhaps the tradition of it have been effaced from remembrance by that war which in our own day consumed the liv twenty millions of the Black-haired Race, and erated from the face of the world even the wonc City of Porcelain itself — the City of King-te- that of old shone like a jewel of fire in the mountain-girdle of Feou-liang.

Before his time indeed the Spirit of the Furnace had being; had issued from the Infinite Vitality; had become manifest as an emanation of the Supreme Tao. For Hoang-ti, nearly five thousand years ago, taught men to make good vessels of baked clay; and in his time all potters had learned to know the God of Oven-fires, and turned their wheels to the murmuring of prayer. But Hoang-ti had been gathered unto his fathers for thrice ten hundred years before that man was born destined by the Master of Heaven to become the Porcelain-God.

And his divine ghost, ever hovering above the smoking and the toiling of the potteries, still gives power to the thought of the shaper, grace to the genius of the designer, luminosity to the touch of the enamelist. For by his heaven-taught wisdom was the art of porcelain created; by his inspiration were accomplished all the miracles of Thao-yu, maker of the Kia-yu-ki, and all the marvels made by those who followed after him;

All the azure porcelains called "You-kouo-thien-tsing"; brilliant as a mirror, thin as paper of rice, sonorous as the melodious stone Khing, and colored, in obedience to the mandate of the Emperor Chi-tsong, "blue as the sky is after rain, when viewed through the rifts of the clouds." These were, indeed, the first of all porcelains, likewise called "Tchai-yao," which no man, howsoever wicked, could find courage to break, for they charmed the eye like jewels of price;

And the "Jou-yao," second in rank among all porcelains, sometimes mocking the aspect and the serenity of bronze, sometimes blue as summer waters, and deluding the sight with moist appearance of thickly floating spawn of fish;

And the "Kouan-yao," which are the porcelains of Magistrates, and third in rank of merit among all wondrous porcelains, colored with colors of the morning — skyey blueness, with the rose of a great dawn blushing and bursting through it, and long-limbed marsh-birds flying against the glow;

Also the "Ko-yao" — fourth in rank among perfect porcelains — of fair, faint, changing colors, like the body of a living fish, or made in the likeness of opal substance, milk mixed with fire; the work of Sing-I, elder of the immortal brothers Tchang;

Also the "Ting-yao" — fifth in rank among all perfect porcelains — white as the mourning garments of a spouse bereaved, and beautiful with a trickling as of tears — the porcelains sung of by the poet Sou-tong-po;

Also the porcelains called "Pi-se-yao," whose colors are called "hidden," being alternately invisible and visible, like the rivers of ice beneath the sun — the porcelains celebrated by the far-famed singer Sin-in;

Also the wondrous "Chu-yao" — the pallid porcelains that utter a mournful cry when smitten — the porcelains chanted of by the mighty chanter, Thou-chao-ling;

Also the porcelains called "Thsin-yao," white or blue, surface-wrinkled as the face of water by the fluttering of many fins. . . . And ye can see the fish!

Also the vases called "Tsi-hong-khi," red as sunset after a rain; and the "T'o-t'ai-khi," fragile as the wings of the silkworm-moth, lighter than the shell of an egg;

Also the "Kia-tsing" — fair cups pearl-white when empty, yet, by some incomprehensible witchcraft of construction, seeming to swarm with purple fish the moment they are filled with water;

Also the porcelains called "Yao-pien," whose tints are transmuted by the alchemy of fire; for they enter blood-crimson into the heat, and change there to lizard-green, and at last come forth azure as the cheek of the sky;

Also the "Ki-tcheou-yao," which are all violet as a summer's night; and the "Hing-yao" that sparkle with the sparklings of mingled silver and snow;

Also the "Sieouen-yao" — some ruddy as iron in the furnace, some diaphanous and ruby-red, some granulated and yellow as the rind of an orange, some softly flushed as the skin of a peach;

Also the "Tsoui-khi-yao," crackled and green as ancient ice is; and the "Tchou-fou-yao," which are the Porcelains of Emperors, with dragons wriggling and snarling in gold; and those yao that are pink-ribbed and have their angles serrated as the claws of crabs are;

Also the "Ou-ni-yao," black as the pupil of the

eye, and as lustrous; and the "Hou-tien-yao," darkly yellow as the faces of men of India; and the "Ou-kong-yao," whose color is the dead-gold of autumn-leaves;

Also the "Long-kang-yoa," green as the seedling of a pea, but bearing also paintings of sun-silvered cloud, and of the Dragons of Heaven;

Also the "Tching-hao-yoa" — pictured with the amber bloom of grapes and the verdure of vine-leaves and the blossoming of poppies, or decorated in relief with figures of fighting crickets;

Also the "Khang-hi-nien-ts'ang-yao," celestial azure sown with star-dust of gold; and the "Khien-long-nien-thang-yao," splendid in sable and silver as a fervid night that is flashed with lightnings.

Not indeed the "Long-Ouang-yao" — painted with the lascivious "Pi-hi," with the obscene "Nan-niu-ssé-sie," with the shameful "Tchun-hoa," or "Pictures of Spring"; abominations created by command of the wicked Emperor Moutsong, though the Spirit of the Furnace hid his face and fled away;

But all other vases of startling form and substance, magically articulated, and ornamented with figures in relief, in cameo, in transparency — the vases with orifices belled like the cups of flowers, or cleft like the bills of birds, or fanged like the jaws of serpents, or pink-lipped as the mouth of a girl; the vases flesh-colored and purple-veined and dimpled, with ears and with earrings; the vases in likeness of mush-rooms, of lotus-flowers, of lizards, of horse-footed

dragons woman-faced; the vases strangely translucid, that simulate the white glimmering of grains of prepared rice, that counterfeit the vapory lacework of frost, that imitate the efflorescences of coral;

Also the statues in porcelain of divinities: the Genius of the Hearth; the Long-pinn who are the Twelve Deities of Ink; the blessed Lao-tseu, born with silver hair; Kong-fu-tse, grasping the scroll of written wisdom; Kouan-in, sweetest Goddess of Mercy, standing snowy-footed upon the heart of her golden lily; Chi-nong, the god who taught men how to cook; Fo, with long eyes closed in meditation, and lips smiling the mysterious smile of Supreme Beatitude; Cheou-lao, god of Longevity, bestriding his aerial steed, the white-winged stork; Pou-t'ai, Lord of Contentment and of Wealth, obese and dreamy; and that fairest Goddess of Talent, from whose beneficent hands eternally streams the iridescent rain of pearls.

And though many a secret of that matchless art that Pu bequeathed unto men may indeed have been forgotten and lost forever, the story of the Porcelain-God is remembered; and I doubt not that any of the aged Jeou-yen-liao-kong, any one of the old blind men of the great potteries, who sit all day grinding colors in the sun, could tell you Pu was once a humble Chinese workman, who grew to be a great artist by dint of tireless study and patience and by the inspiration of Heaven. So famed he became that

some deemed him an alchemist, who possessed the secret called "White-and-Yellow," by which stones might be turned into gold; and others thought him a magician, having the ghastly power of murdering men with horror of nightmare, by hiding charmed effigies of them under the tiles of their own roofs; and others, again, averred that he was an astrologer who had discovered the mystery of those Five Hing which influence all things — those Powers that move even in the currents of the star-drift, in the milky Tien-ho, or River of the Sky. Thus, at least, the ignorant spoke of him; but even those who stood about the Son of Heaven, those whose hearts had been strengthened by the acquisition of wisdom, wildly praised the marvels of his handicraft, and asked each other if there might be any imaginable form of beauty which Pu could not evoke from that beauteous substance so docile to the touch of his cunning hand.

And one day it came to pass that Pu sent a priceless gift to the Celestial and August: a vase imitating the substance of ore-rock, all aflame with pyritic scintillation — a shape of glittering splendor with chameleons sprawling over it; chameleons of porcelain that shifted color as often as the beholder changed his position. And the Emperor, wondering exceedingly at the splendor of the work, questioned the princes and the mandarins concerning him that made it. And the princes and the mandarins answered that he was a workman named Pu, and that

he was without equal among potters, knowing secrets that seemed to have been inspired either by gods or by demons. Whereupon the Son of Heaven sent his officers to Pu with a noble gift, and summoned him unto his presence.

So the humble artisan entered before the Emperor, and having performed the supreme prostration — thrice kneeling, and thrice nine times touching the ground with his forehead — awaited the command of the August.

And the Emperor spake to him, saying: "Son, thy gracious gift hath found high favor in our sight; and for the charm of that offering we have bestowed upon thee a reward of five thousand silver liang. But thrice that sum shall be awarded thee so soon as thou shalt have fulfilled our behest. Hearken, therefore, O matchless artificer! It is now our will that thou make for us a vase having the tint and the aspect of living flesh, but — mark well our desire! — *of flesh made to creep by the utterance of such words as poets utter — flesh moved by an Idea, flesh horripilated by a Thought!* Obey, and answer not! We have spoken."

Now Pu was the most cunning of all the P'ei-se-kong, the men who marry colors together; of all the Hoa-yang-kong, who draw the shapes of vase-decoration; of all the Hoei-sse-kong, who paint in enamel; of all the T'ien-thsai-kong, who brighten color; of all the Chao-lou-kong, who watch the furnace fires

and the porcelain ovens. But he went away sorrowing from the Palace of the Son of Heaven, notwithstanding the gift of five thousand silver liang which had been given to him. For he thought to himself: "Surely the mystery of the comeliness of flesh, and the mystery of that by which it is moved, are the secrets of the Supreme Tao. How shall man lend the aspect of sentient life to dead clay? Who save the Infinite can give soul?"

Now Pu had discovered those witchcrafts of color, those surprises of grace, that make the art of the ceramist. He had found the secret of the feng-hong, the wizard flush of the Rose; of the hoa-hong, the delicious incarnadine; of the mountain-green called chan-lou; of the pale soft yellow termed hiao-hoang-yeou; and of the hoang-kin, which is the blazing beauty of gold. He had found those eel tints, those serpent greens, those pansy violets, those furnace crimsons, those carminates and lilacs, subtle as spirit flame, which our enamelists of the Occident long sought without success to reproduce. But he trembled at the task assigned him, as he returned to the toil of his studio, saying: "How shall any miserable man render in clay the quivering of flesh to an Idea — the inexplicable horripilation of a Thought? Shall a man venture to mock the magic of that Eternal Moulder by whose infinite power a million suns are shapen more readily than one small jar might be rounded upon my wheel?"

Yet the command of the Celestial and August might never be disobeyed; and the patient workman strove with all his power to fulfill the Son of Heaven's desire. But vainly for days, for weeks, for months, for season after season, did he strive; vainly also he prayed unto the gods to aid him; vainly he besought the Spirit of the Furnace, crying: "O thou Spirit of Fire, hear me, heed me, help me! how shall I — a miserable man, unable to breathe into clay a living soul — how shall I render in this inanimate substance the aspect of flesh made to creep by the utterance of a Word, sentient to the horripilation of a Thought?"

For the Spirit of the Furnace made strange answer to him with whispering of fire: "Vast thy faith, weird thy prayer! Has Thought feet, that man may perceive the trace of its passing? Canst thou measure me the blast of the Wind?"

Nevertheless, with purpose unmoved, nine-and-forty times did Pu seek to fulfill the Emperor's command; nine-and-forty times he strove to obey the behest of the Son of Heaven. Vainly, alas! did he consume his substance; vainly did he expend his strength; vainly did he exhaust his knowledge: success smiled not upon him; and Evil visited his home, and Poverty sat in his dwelling, and Misery shivered at his hearth.

Sometimes, when the hour of trial came, it was found that the colors had become strangely trans-

muted in the firing, or had faded into ashen pallor, or had darkened into the fuliginous hue of forest mould. And Pu, beholding these misfortunes, made wail to the Spirit of the Furnace, praying: "O thou Spirit of Fire, how shall I render the likeness of lustrous flesh, the warm glow of living color, unless thou aid me?"

And the Spirit of the Furnace mysteriously answered him with murmuring of fire: "Canst thou learn the art of that Infinite Enameler who hath made beautiful the Arch of Heaven — whose brush is Light; whose paints are the Colors of the Evening?"

Sometimes, again, even when the tints had not changed, after the pricked and labored surface had seemed about to quicken in the heat, to assume the vibratility of living skin — even at the last hour all the labor of the workers proved to have been wasted; for the fickle substance rebelled against their efforts, producing only crinklings grotesque as those upon the rind of a withered fruit, or granulations like those upon the skin of a dead bird from which the feathers have been rudely plucked. And Pu wept, and cried out unto the Spirit of the Furnace: "O thou Spirit of Flame, how shall I be able to imitate the thrill of flesh touched by a Thought, unless thou wilt vouchsafe to lend me thine aid?"

And the Spirit of the Furnace mysteriously answered him with muttering of fire: "Canst thou give ghost unto a stone? Canst thou thrill with a Thought the entrails of the granite hills?"

Sometimes it was found that all the work indeed had not failed; for the color seemed good, and all faultless the matter of the vase appeared to be, having neither crack nor wrinkling nor crinkling; but the pliant softness of warm skin did not meet the eye; the flesh-tinted surface offered only the harsh aspect and hard glimmer of metal. All their exquisite toil to mock the pulpiness of sentient substance had left no trace; had been brought to nought by the breath of the furnace. And Pu, in his despair, shrieked to the Spirit of the Furnace: "O thou merciless divinity! O thou most pitiless god! — thou whom I have worshiped with ten thousand sacrifices! — for what fault hast thou abandoned me? — for what error hast thou forsaken me? How may I, most wretched of men! ever render the aspect of flesh made to creep with the utterance of a Word, sentient to the titillation of a Thought, if thou wilt not aid me?"

And the Spirit of the Furnace made answer unto him with roaring of fire: "Canst thou divide a Soul? Nay! . . . Thy life for the life of thy work! — thy soul for the soul of thy Vase!"

And hearing these words Pu arose with a terrible resolve swelling at his heart, and made ready for the last and fiftieth time to fashion his work for the oven.

One hundred times did he sift the clay and the quartz, the kao-ling and the tun; one hundred times did he purify them in clearest water; one hundred times with tireless hands did he knead the creamy

paste, mingling it at last with colors known only to himself. Then was the vase shapen and reshapen, and touched and retouched by the hands of Pu, until its blandness seemed to live, until it appeared to quiver and to palpitate, as with vitality from within, as with the quiver of rounded muscle undulating beneath the integument. For the hues of life were upon it and infiltrated throughout its innermost substance, imitating the carnation of blood-bright tissue, and the reticulated purple of the veins; and over all was laid the envelope of sun-colored Pe-kia-ho, the lucid and glossy enamel, half diaphanous, even like the substance that it counterfeited — the polished skin of a woman. Never since the making of the world had any work comparable to this been wrought by the skill of man.

Then Pu bade those who aided him that they should feed the furnace well with wood of tcha; but he told his resolve unto none. Yet after the oven began to glow, and he saw the work of his hands blossoming and blushing in the heat, he bowed himself before the Spirit of Flame, and murmured: "O thou Spirit and Master of Fire, I know the truth of thy words! I know that a Soul may never be divided! Therefore my life for the life of my work! — my soul for the soul of my Vase!"

And for nine days and for eight nights the furnaces were fed unceasingly with wood of tcha; for nine days and for eight nights men watched the wondrous

vase crystallizing into being, rose-lighted by the breath of the flame. Now upon the coming of the ninth night, Pu bade all his weary comrades retire to rest, for that the work was well-nigh done, and the success assured. "If you find me not here at sunrise," he said, "fear not to take forth the vase; for I know that the task will have been accomplished according to the command of the August." So they departed.

But in that same ninth night Pu entered the flame, and yielded up his ghost in the embrace of the Spirit of the Furnace, giving his life for the life of his work — his soul for the soul of his Vase.

And when the workmen came upon the tenth morning to take forth the porcelain marvel, even the bones of Pu had ceased to be; but lo! the Vase lived as they looked upon it: seeming to be flesh moved by the utterance of a Word, creeping to the titillation of a Thought. And whenever tapped by the finger it uttered a voice and a name — the voice of its maker, the name of its creator: Pu.

And the Son of Heaven, hearing of these things, and viewing the miracle of the vase, said unto those about him: "Verily, the Impossible hath been wrought by the strength of faith, by the force of obedience! Yet never was it our desire that so cruel a sacrifice should have been; we sought only to know whether the skill of the matchless artificer came from the Divinities or from the Demons — from heaven

or from hell. Now, indeed, we discern that Pu hath taken his place among the gods." And the Emperor mourned exceedingly for his faithful servant. But he ordained that godlike honors should be paid unto the spirit of the marvelous artist, and that his memory should be revered forevermore, and that fair statues of him should be set up in all the cities of the Celestial Empire, and above all the toiling of the potteries, that the multitude of workers might unceasingly call upon his name and invoke his benediction upon their labors.

NOTES

"THE Soul of the Great Bell." The story of Ko-Ngai is one of the collection entitled "Pe-Hiao-Tou-Choue," or "A Hundred Examples of Filial Piety." It is very simply told by the Chinese narrator. The scholarly French consul, P. Dabry de Thiersant, translated and published in 1877 a portion of the book, including the legend of the Bell. His translation is enriched with a number of Chinese drawings; and there is a quaint little picture of Ko-Ngai leaping into the molten metal.

"The Story of Ming-Y." The singular phantom-tale upon which my work is based forms the thirty-fourth story of the famous collection "Kin-Kou-Ki-Koan," and was first translated under the title, "La Bachelière du Pays de Chu," by the learned Gustave Schlegel, as an introduction to his publication (accompanied by a French version) of the curious and obscene "Mai-yu-lang-toú-tchen-hoa-koueï" (Leyden, 1877), which itself forms the seventh recital of the same work. Schlegel, Julien, Gardner, Birch, D'Entrecolles, Rémusat, Pavie, Olyphant, Grisebach, Hervey-Saint-Denys, and others, have given the Occidental world translations of eighteen stories from the "Kin-Kou-Ki-Koan"; namely, numbers II, III, V, VI, VII, VIII, X, XIV, XIX, XX, XXVI, XXVII, XXIX, XXX, XXXI, XXXIV, XXXV, XXXIX. The Chinese work itself dates back to the thirteenth century; but as it forms only a collection of the most popular tales of that epoch, many of the stories selected by the Chinese editor may have had a much more ancient origin. There are forty tales in the "Kin-Kou-Ki-Koan."

"The Legend of Tchi-Niu." My authority for this tale is the following legend from the thirty-fourth chapter of the "Kan-ing-p'ien," or "Book of Rewards and Punishments" — a work attributed to Lao-tseu, which contains some four hundred anecdotes and traditions of the most curious kind:

Tong-yong, who lived under the Han dynasty, was reduced to a state

of extreme poverty. Having lost his father, he sold himself in order to obtain . . . the wherewithal to bury him and to build him a tomb. The Master of Heaven took pity on him, and sent the Goddess Tchi-Niu to him to become his wife. She wove a piece of silk for him every day until she was able to buy his freedom, after which she gave him a son, and went back to heaven.[1]

Lest the reader should suppose, however, that I have drawn wholly upon my own imagination for the details of the apparition, the cure, the marriage ceremony, etc., I refer him to number XCVI of Giles's "Strange Stories from a Chinese Studio," entitled, "A Supernatural Wife," in which he will find that my narrative is at least conformable to Chinese ideas.[2]

"The Return of Yen-Tchin-King." There may be an involuntary anachronism in my version of this legend, which is very pithily narrated in the "Kan-ing-p'ien." No emperor's name is cited by the homilist; and the date of the revolt seems to have been left wholly to conjecture. Baber, in his "Memoirs," mentions one of his Mongol archers as able to bend a two-hundred-pound bow until the ears met.

"The Tradition of the Tea-Plant." My authority for this bit of folklore is the brief statement published by Bretschneider in the "Chinese Recorder" for 1871:

A Japanese legend says that about A.D. 519, a Buddhist priest came to China, and, in order to dedicate his soul entirely to God, he made a vow to pass the day and night in an uninterrupted and unbroken meditation. After many years of this continual watching, he was at length so tired that he fell asleep. On awaking the following morning, he was so sorry he had broken his vow that he cut off both his eyelids and threw them upon the ground. Returning to the same place the following day he observed that each eyelid had become a shrub. This was the *tea-shrub*, unknown until that time.

Bretschneider adds that the legend in question seems not to be known to the Chinese; yet in view of the fact that Buddhism itself, with all its marvelous legends, was received by the Japanese from China, it is certainly probable this legend had a Chinese origin — subsequently disguised by Japanese chronology.

[1] Julien's French translation, p. 119.

[2] This story first appeared in *Harper's Bazar*, and is republished here by permission.

My Buddhist texts were drawn from Fernand Hû's translation of the Dhammapada, and from Leon Feer's translation from the Thibetan of the "Sutra in Forty-two Articles." An Orientalist who should condescend in a rare leisure-moment to glance at my work might also discover that I had borrowed an idea or two from the Sanscrit poet, Bhâminî-Vilâsa.

"The Tale of the Porcelain-God." The good Père d'Entrecolles, who first gave to Europe the secrets of Chinese porcelain manufacture, wrote one hundred and sixty years ago:

> The Emperors of China are, during their lifetime, the most redoubted of divinities; and they believe that nothing should ever stand in the way of their desires. . . .
>
> It is related that once upon a time a certain Emperor insisted that some porcelains should be made for him according to a model which he gave. It was answered that the thing was simply impossible; but all such remonstrances only served to excite his desire more and more. . . . The officers charged by the demigod to supervise and hasten the work treated the workmen with great harshness. The poor wretches spent all their money, took exceeding pains, and received only blows in return. One of them, in a fit of despair, leaped into the blazing furnace, and was instantly burnt to ashes. But the porcelain that was being baked there at the time came out, they say, perfectly beautiful and to the satisfaction of the Emperor. . . . From that time, the unfortunate workman was regarded as a hero; and his image was made the idol which presides over the manufacture of porcelain.

It appears that D'Entrecolles mistook the statue of Pou't'ai, God of Comfort, for that of the real porcelain-deity, as Jacquemart and others observe. This error does not, however, destroy the beauty of the myth; and there is no good reason to doubt that D'Entrecolles related it as it had been told him by some of his Chinese friends at King-te-chin. The researches of Stanislas Julien and others have only tended to confirm the trustworthiness of the Catholic missionary's statements in other respects; and both Julien and Salvétat, in their admirable French rendering of the "King-te-chin-thao-lou," "History of the Porcelains of King-te-chin" (a work which has been of the greatest service to me in the preparation of my little story), quote from his letters at considerable length, and award him the highest praise as a conscientious investigator. So far as I have been able

to learn, D'Entrecolles remains the sole authority for the myth; but his affirmations in regard to other matters have withstood the severe tests of time astonishingly well; and since the Tai-ping Rebellion destroyed King-te-chin and paralyzed its noble industry, the value of the French missionary's documents and testimony has become widely recognized. In lieu of any other name for the hero of the legend, I have been obliged to retain that of Pou, or Pu — only using it without the affix "t'ai" — so as to distinguish it from the deity of comfort and repose.

GLOSSARY

ABHIDHARMA. The metaphysics of Buddhism. Buddhist literature is classed into three great divisions, or "baskets"; the highest of these is the Abhidharma. . . . According to a passage in Spence Hardy's "Manual of Buddhism," the full comprehension of the Abhidharma is possible only for a Buddha to acquire.

CHIH. "House"; but especially the house of the dead — a tomb.

CHU-SHA-KIH. The mandarin-orange.

ÇRAMANA. An ascetic; one who has subdued his senses. For an interesting history of this term, see Burnouf, "Introduction à l'histoire du Buddhisme Indien."

DAMÂRI. A peculiar chant, of somewhat licentious character, most commonly sung during the period of the Indian carnival. For an account, at once brief and entertaining, of Hindoo popular songs and hymns, see Garcin de Tassy, "Chants populaires de l'Inde."

DOGS OF FO. The Dog of Fo is one of those fabulous monsters in the sculptural representation of which Chinese art has found its most grotesque expression. It is really an exaggerated lion; and the symbolical relation of the lion to Buddhism is well known. Statues of these mythical animals — sometimes of a grandiose and colossal execution — are placed in pairs before the entrances of temples, palaces, and tombs, as tokens of honor, and as emblems of divine protection.

FO. Buddha is called Fo, Fuh, Fuh-tu, Hwut, Fát, in various Chinese dialects. The name is thought to be a corruption of the Hindoo Bodh, or "Truth," due to the imperfect articulation of the Chinese. . . . It is a curious fact that the Chinese Buddhist liturgy is Sanscrit transliterated into Chinese characters, and that the priests have lost all recollection of the antique tongue — repeating the texts without the least comprehension of their meaning.

FUH-YIN. An official holding in Chinese cities a position corresponding to that of mayor in the Occident.

FUNG-HOANG. This allegorical bird, corresponding to the Arabian phœnix in some respects, is described as being five cubits high, having feathers of five different colors, and singing in five modulations. . . . The female is said to sing in imperfect tones; the male in perfect tones. The fung-hoang figures largely in Chinese musical myths and legends.

GOPIA (*or* GOPIS). Daughters and wives of the cowherds of Vrindavana, among whom Krishna was brought up after his incarnation as the eighth avatar of Vishnu. Krishna's amours with the shepherdesses, or Gopia, form the subject of various celebrated mystical writings, especially the "Prem-Ságar," or "Ocean of Love" (translated by Eastwick and by others); and the sensuous "Gita-Govinda" of the Bengalese lyric poet Jayadeva (translated into French prose by Hippolyte Fauche, and chastely rendered into English verse by Edwin Arnold in the "Indian Song of Songs"). See also Burnouf's partial translation of the "Bhagavata Purana," and Théodore Pavie's "Kriçhna et sa doctrine." . . . The same theme has inspired some of the strangest productions of Hindoo art: for examples, see plates 65 and 66 of Moor's "Hindoo Pantheon" (edition of 1861). For accounts of the erotic mysticism connected with the worship of Krishna and the Gopia, the reader may also be referred to authorities cited in Barth's "Religions of India"; De Tassy's "Chants populaires de l'Inde"; and Lamairesse's "Poésies populaires du Sud de l'Inde."

HAO-KHIEOU-TCHOUAN. This celebrated Chinese novel was translated into French by M. Guillard d'Arcy in 1842, and appeared under the title, "Hao-Khieou-Tchouan; ou, La Femme Accomplie." The first translation of the romance into any European tongue was a Portuguese rendering; and the English version of Percy is based upon the Portuguese text. The work is rich in poetical quotations.

HEÏ-SONG-CHÉ-TCHOO. "One day when the Emperor Hiuan-tsong of the Thang dynasty," says the "Tao-kia-ping-yu-che," "was at work in his study, a tiny Taoist priest, no bigger than a fly, rose out of the inkstand lying upon his table, and said to him: 'I am the Genius of ink; my name is Heï-song-ché-tchoo ["Envoy of the Black Fir"]; and I have come to tell you that whenever a true sage shall sit down to write, the

Twelve Divinities of Ink ["Long-pinn"] will appear upon the surface of the ink he uses.' "[1]

HOA-TCHAO. The "Birthday of a Hundred Flowers" falls upon the fifteenth of the second spring-moon.

JADE. Jade, or nephrite, a variety of jasper — called by the Chinese "yuh" — has always been highly valued by them as artistic material. . . . In the "Book of Rewards and Punishments," there is a curious legend to the effect that Confucius, after the completion of his "Hiao-King" ("Book of Filial Piety"), having addressed himself to Heaven, a crimson rainbow fell from the sky, and changed itself at his feet into a piece of yellow jade.[2]

KABIT. A poetical form much in favor with composers of Hindoo religious chants: the kabit always consists of four verses.

KAO-LING. Literally, "the High Ridge," and originally the name of a hilly range which furnished the best quality of clay to the porcelain-makers. Subsequently the term applied by long custom to designate the material itself became corrupted into the word now familiar in all countries — kaolin. In the language of the Chinese potters, the kaolin, or clay, was poetically termed the "bones," and the tun, or quartz, the "flesh" of the porcelain; while the prepared bricks of the combined substances were known as "pe-tun-tse." Both substances, the infusible and the fusible, are productions of the same geological formation — decomposed feldspathic rock.

KASÍ (*or* VARANASI). Ancient name of Benares, the "Sacred City," believed to have been founded by the gods. It is also called "The Lotus of the World." Barth terms it "the Jerusalem of all the sects both of ancient and modern India." It still boasts two thousand shrines, and half a million images of divinities.[3]

KIANG-KOU-JIN. Literally, the "tell-old-story-men." For a brief account of Chinese professional story-tellers, the reader may consult Schlegel's entertaining introduction to the "Mai-yu-lang-toú-tchen-hoa-koueï."

KIN. The most perfect of Chinese musical instruments, also

[1] See *L'Encre de Chine*, by Maurice Jametel, Paris, 1882.

[2] See Stanislas Julien's translation, p. 495.

[3] See also Sherring's *Sacred City of the Hindoos*.

called "the Scholar's Lute." The word "kin" also means "to prohibit"; and this name is said to have been given to the instrument because music, according to Chinese belief, "*restrains evil passions, and corrects the human heart.*" [1]

KOUEI. Kouei, musician to the Emperor Yao, must have held his office between 2357 and 2277 B.C. The extract selected from one of his songs, which I have given at the beginning of the "Story of Ming-Y," is therefore more than four thousand years old. The same chant contains another remarkable fancy, evidencing Chinese faith in musical magic:

"When I smite my [musical] stone —
Be it gently, be it strongly —
Then do the fiercest beasts of prey leap high for joy,
And the chiefs among the public officials do agree among themselves."

KWANG-CHAU-FU. Literally, "The Broad City" — the name of Canton. It is also called "The City of Genii."

LÍ. A measure of distance. The length of the lí has varied considerably in ancient and in modern times. The present is given by Williams as ten lí to a league.

LI-SOA. "The Dissipation of Grief," one of the most celebrated Chinese poems of the classic period. It is said to have been written about 314 B.C., by Kiu-ping-youen, minister to the King of Tsou. Finding himself the victim of a base court-intrigue, Kiu-ping wrote the "Li-Sao" as a vindication of his character, and as a rebuke to the malice of his enemies, after which he committed suicide by drowning. . . . A fine French translation of the "Li-Sao" has been made by the Marquis Hervey de Saint-Denys (Paris, 1870).

LI-SHU. The second of the six styles of Chinese writing, for an account of which see Williams's "Middle Kingdom." . . . According to various Taoist legends, the decrees of Heaven are recorded in the "Seal character," the oldest of all; and marks upon the bodies of persons killed by lightning have been interpreted as judgments written in it. The following extraordinary tale from the "Kan-ing-p'ien" affords a good example of the superstition in question:

Tchang-tchun was Minister of State under the reign of Hoeï-tsong,

[1] See Williams's *Middle Kingdom.*

of the Song dynasty. He occupied himself wholly in weaving perfidious plots. He died in exile at Mo-tcheou. Some time after, while the Emperor was hunting, there fell a heavy rain, which obliged him to seek shelter in a poor man's hut. The thunder rolled with violence; and the lightning killed a man, a woman, and a little boy. On the backs of the man and woman were found red characters, which could not be deciphered; but on the back of the little boy the following six words could be read, written in Tchouen (antique) characters: TSÉ-TCH'IN-TCHANG-TCHUN-HEOU-CHIN — which mean: "Child of the issue of Tchang-tchun, who was a rebellious subject." [1]

PAGAL. The ankle-ring commonly worn by Hindoo women; it is also called "nupur." It is hollow, and contains loose bits of metal, which tinkle when the foot is moved.

SAN-HIEN. A three-stringed Chinese guitar. Its belly is usually covered with snake-skin.

SIU-FAN-TI. Literally, "the Sweeping of the Tombs" — the day of the general worship of ancestors; the Chinese "All-Souls'." It falls in the early part of April, the period called "tsing-ming."

TA-CHUNG SZ'. Literally, "Temple of the Bell." The building at Pekin so named covers probably the largest suspended bell in the world, cast in the reign of Yong-lo, about 1406 A.D., and weighing upwards of 120,000 pounds.

TAO. The infinite being, or Universal Life, whence all forms proceed: Literally, "the Way," in the sense of the First Cause. Lao-tseu uses the term in other ways; but that primal and most important philosophical sense which he gave to it is well explained in the celebrated chapter XXV of the "Tao-te-king." . . . The difference between the great Chinese thinker's conception of the First Cause — the Unknowable — and the theories of other famous metaphysicians, Oriental and Occidental, is set forth with some definiteness in Stanislas Julien's introduction to the "Tao-te-king," pp. X–XV.[2]

THANG. The Dynasty of Thang, which flourished between 620 and 907 A.D., encouraged literature and art, and gave to China its most brilliant period. The three poets of the Thang

[1] *Le Livre des Récompenses et des Peines*, traduit par Stanislas Julien, p. 446.

[2] *Le Livre de la Voie et de la Vertu.* Paris, 1842.

dynasty mentioned in the second story flourished between 779 and 852 A.D.

"THREE COUNCILLORS." Six stars of the Great-Bear constellation ($\iota\kappa - \lambda\mu - \nu\xi$), as apparently arranged in pairs, are thus called by the Chinese astrologers and mythologists. The three couples are further distinguished as the Superior Councillor, Middle Councillor, and Inferior Councillor; and, together with the Genius of the Northern Heaven, form a celestial tribunal, presiding over the duration of human life, and deciding the course of mortal destiny.[1]

TIEN-HIA. Literally, "Under-Heaven," or "Beneath-the-Sky" — one of the most ancient of those many names given by the Chinese to China. The name "China" itself is never applied by the Black-haired Race to their own country, and is supposed to have had its origin in the fame of the first Tsin dynasty, whose founder, Tsin Chí-Houang-tí, built the Great, or "Myriad-Mile," Wall, twenty-two and a half degrees of latitude in length. . . .[2]

TSIEN. The well-known Chinese copper coin, with a square hole in the middle for stringing, is thus named. According to quality of metal it takes from nine hundred to eighteen hundred tsien to make one silver dollar.

TSING-JIN. "Men of Tsing." From very ancient times the Chinese have been wont to call themselves by the names of their famous dynasties — Han-jin, "the men of Han"; Thang-jin, "the men of Thang," etc. Ta Tsing Kwoh ("Great Pure Kingdom") is the name given by the present dynasty to China — according to which the people might call themselves Tsing-jin, or "men of Tsing." Williams, however, remarks that they will not yet accept the appellation.

VERSES (CHINESE). The verses preceding "The Legend of Tchi-Niu" afford some remarkable examples of Chinese onomatopœia. They occur in the sixth strophe of Miên-miên, which is the third chant of the first section of Ta-ya, the Third Book of the "Chi-King." [1] Dr. Legge translates the strophe thus:

---

[1] Note by Stanislas Julien in *Le Livre des Récompenses et des Peines.*

[2] See Williams regarding occurrence of the name "China" in Sanscrit literature.

. . . Crowds brought the earth in baskets; they threw it with shouts into the frames; they beat it with responsive blows; they pared the walls repeatedly till they sounded strong.[1]

Pauthier translates the verses somewhat differently; preserving the onomatopœia in three of the lines. Hoûng-hoûng are the sounds heard in the timber-yards where the wood is being measured; from the workshops the builders respond the sounds of tông-tông; and the solid walls, when fully finished off, give out the sound of pîng-pîng.

YAO. "Porcelain." The reader who desires detailed information respecting the technology, history, or legends of Chinese porcelain-manufacture should consult Stanislas Julien's admirable "Histoire de la Porcelaine Chinoise" (Paris, 1856). With some trifling exceptions, the names of the various porcelains cited in my "Tale of the Porcelain-God" were selected from Julien's work. Though oddly musical and otherwise attractive in Chinese, these names lose interest by translation. The majority of them merely refer to centres of manufacture or famous potteries: Chou-yao, "porcelains of Chou"; Hong-tcheou-yao, "porcelains of Hong-tcheou"; Jou-yao, "porcelains of Jou-tcheou"; Ting-yao, "porcelains of Ting-tcheou"; Ko-yao, "porcelains of the Elder Brother [Thsang]" Khang-hi-nien-t'sang-yao, "porcelains of Thsang made in the reign of Khang hi." Some porcelains were distinguished by the names of dynasties, or the titles of civic office holders; such as the celebrated Tch'aï-yao, "the porcelains of Tch'aï" (which was the name of the family of the Emperor Chi-tsong); and the Kouan-yao, or "Porcelains of Magistrates." Much more rarely the names refer directly to the material or artistic peculiarity of porcelains — as Ou-ni-yao, the "black-paste porcelains," or Pi-se-yao, the "porcelains of hidden color." The word "khi," sometimes substituted for "yao" in these compound names, means "vases"; as Jou-khi, "vases of Jou-tcheou"; Kouan-khi, "vases for Magistrates."

---

[1] See G. Pauthier's French version.

[2] *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. III, *The She-King*, p. 384.

END OF VOLUME I

814.3
H431
v.1

NOV 5 '70

FEB 6 1977

Stanford University Library
Stanford, California

In order that others may use this book, please return it as soon as possible, but not later than the date due.